

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVIL IN THE THEODICY OF IV EZRA

**A Study Illustrating the Significance of Form and Structure
for the Meaning of the Book**

by

ALDEN LLOYD THOMPSON

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVIL IN THE THEODICY OF IV EZRA..... A Study Illustrating the Significance of Form and Structure for the Meaning of the Book.

The primary purpose of this study is to analyze IV Ezra as theodicy and in particular to establish where the author would place the ultimate responsibility for evil.

Judging from the traditions which the author of IV Ezra apparently had available to him, there were four different levels at which he could establish responsibility for evil: first, he could affirm that each man is responsible for his own sin; second, he could place the blame on Adam or Eve; third, he could shift responsibility onto a supernatural evil being, Satan; or fourth, he could implicate God himself by means of the evil yetzer tradition. The development and use of these traditions in the OT and intertestamental Jewish sources has been noted in chapter I where it is shown that all four traditions may be woven together in the same literary work. Yet even when responsibility for evil is shifted onto Adam, Satan or God, the individual is consistently held to be responsible for determining his own destiny, the difference between the sources being only the degree of emphasis with which individual responsibility is maintained.

The theodicy-related matters of IV Ezra are taken up most specifically in chapters V and VI, but chapters II-IV focus on an aspect of IV Ezra which is an essential first step for the understanding of the content of the book, namely, the author's use of form and structure in developing his argument. The significant elements are the seven-episode structure and the dialogue format. By means of the dialogue between the distraught, complaining seer and the dogmatic, confident angel, the author has developed his theodicy-problem in episodes I-III; episode IV is transitional, establishing a tone of guarded optimism which is maintained in episodes V-VII. After the transition is accomplished in episode IV, the dialogue tension ceases as Ezra more-or-less adopts the angel's point of view. The crucial question for the interpretation of the book is: where do the author's true convictions appear--on Ezra's side of the dialogue or on Uriel's? This question in particular, and more generally, the interpretation of the seven-episode structure and the dialogue format have been the primary focus of attention in the survey of the history of research in chapter II.

Chapter III concentrates on the dialogue format, comparing and contrasting the dialogue elements in IV Ezra with those of its sister apocalypse, II Baruch. This establishes the points of reference for the detailed tracing of the author's argument in chapter IV. Ezra's interests are seen to progress from a predominant concern with Israel the nation, i.e., the one in the hands of the many (3:1-7:16) to a primary interest in perishing mankind, i.e., the many who will be lost compared with the few who will be saved (7:17-9:25), with a final return to a concern for Israel. The author artfully accomplishes this return from an interest in the many to renewed interest in the one by means of four successive stages: first, he turns from his complaints and from fasting to feasting on flowers; second, he classes himself with sinners for the last time; third, he turns from his interest in the many to a renewed concern for the one, and fourth, he ceases his sorrow--thereafter, if not altogether buoyant in his hopes for the future, at least he is properly fearful in the presence of the divine. All of these transitional aspects are woven into the narrative of episode IV.

After the detailed treatment of the elements of form and structure in chapters II-IV, chapters V and VI return to the specific treatment of theodicy in IV Ezra. Chapter V seeks to define the author's theodicy-problem. The author is seen to be

Use other side if necessary.

struggling with two issues. On the one hand are the narrower sectarian issues connected with the present physical distress of Israel the nation, and on the other hand, there are the universalistic concerns linked with the problem of moral evil and the impending judgment man must face. Though Ezra's initial concern is for Israel, this would appear to be primarily the catalyst for the author's real concern, namely, the problem of moral evil and man's inability to live a righteous life. Not only is this suggested by Ezra's unanswered challenge in 9:14-16, but also by the way his concern about moral evil has managed to permeate even those contexts where the primary interest is Israel.

Finally, the author's attempt at a theodicy is analyzed in chapter VI. On both sides of the dialogue, the author has simultaneously placed the responsibility for evil on the individual, on Adam, and on God, thus making use of three of the four traditions available to him (surveyed in chapter I). He makes no use of a Satanic figure and by pushing the responsibility for evil back to God himself by means of the evil yetzer tradition, he shows his inclination for a solution to the problem of evil that is compatible with monotheism. Yet the author has failed to develop a coherent theodicy on the rational level, neglecting even to make use of those elements of the evil yetzer tradition which would seem to be best suited for constructing a theodicy. But in spite of the lack of a rational solution to his theodicy problem, the author indicates by the way that he has organized his book that he was able to attain an experiential solution. He thereby demonstrates his links with the theodicy traditions of the OT and the ANE where the realm of experience provided the answers that reason could not.

In addition to illustrating the importance of form and structure for the analysis of the elements of theodicy in IV Ezra, the present study has adduced a certain amount of evidence in favor of recognizing the Ezra speeches as an integral part of the author's own viewpoint, rather than as an heretical position against which he is polemicizing as argued by Brandenburger and Harnisch. Not only is this suggested by the author's choice of pseudonym and the heart-rending pathos of the Ezra speeches, but it is confirmed by the way in which the author has manipulated the various formal elements to preserve the "reputation" of his seer while at the same time giving credibility to his complaints. Accordingly, it is possible to typify the author as a truly sensitive person who was attempting a corrective to Jewish theology from within, rather than as a vigorous polemicist who was repulsing an attack on the fundamental principles of his faith. Thus the study of the form and structure of IV Ezra can be seen not only as essential for the proper understanding of the content of the book, but also for the proper appreciation of the author himself and his relationship to his Jewish faith.

SUMMARY

The primary purpose of this study is to analyze IV Ezra as theodicy and in particular to establish where the author would place the ultimate responsibility for evil. Judging from the traditions which the author of IV Ezra apparently had available to him, there were four different levels at which he could establish responsibility for evil: first, he could affirm that each man is responsible for his own sin; second, he could place the blame on Adam or Eve; third, he could shift responsibility onto a supernatural evil being, Satan; or fourth, he could implicate God himself by means of the evil yetzer tradition. The development and use of these traditions in the OT and intertestamental Jewish sources has been noted in chapter I where it is shown that all four traditions may be woven together in the same literary work. Yet even when responsibility for evil is shifted onto Adam, Satan or God, the individual is consistently held to be responsible for determining his own destiny, the difference between the sources being only the degree of emphasis with which individual responsibility is maintained.

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To

WANDA

KARIN and KRISTA

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KEY TO TRANSLATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Translations (and Citations of References): Unless otherwise indicated, the translations and/or references cited in the present study are from the sources noted below. In chapters II-VI, however, the translations of passages from IV Ezra and II Baruch are the author's own, though the phraseology frequently reflects the influence of the RSV rendition of IV Ezra and the APOT II translation of II Baruch.

1. Biblical Material (OT, NT, Apoc.): The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version.
2. Dead Sea Scrolls: English translations are from The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, trans. Geza Vermes. References are to the standard columns and lines of the published scrolls, verified from Die Texte aus Qumran. Hebräisch und deutsch, ed. Eduard Lohse.
3. Josephus: Loeb Classical Library edition.
4. Philo: Loeb Classical Library edition.
5. Pseudepigrapha:
 - a. The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, ed. R.H. Charles, Vol. II.
 - b. Other late Jewish Sources not included in APOT II:
 - The Apocalypse of Abraham, trans. G.H. Box.
 - The Biblical Antiquities of Philo, trans. M.R. James.
 - The Testament of Abraham, trans. G.H. Box.
 - Testamentum Iobi, ed. S.P. Brock.
6. Rabbinic Sources:
 - a. The Babylonian Talmud, ed. Isidore Epstein (Soncino ed.).
 - b. Midrash Rabbah, eds. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (Soncino ed.).
 - c. The Mishnah, trans. Herbert Danby.

Abbreviations:1. Apocrypha and Pseudepigraphs

Apoc. Abr. = Apocalypse of Abraham
 Apoc. Mos. = Apocalypse of Moses
 Ass. Mos. = Assumption of Moses
 II Bar. = Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch
 Books of Adam and Eve = Apoc. Mos. and Vita
 Ecclus. = Ecclesiasticus
 I En. = Ethiopic Enoch
 II En. = Slavonic Enoch
 Jub. = Jubilees
 Mar. Is. = Martyrdom of Isaiah (Ascension of Isaiah)
 Ps.-Philo = Biblical Antiquities of Philo (Pseudo-Philo)
 Ps. Sol. = Psalms of Solomon
 Test. Abr. = Testament of Abraham
 Testaments = Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs
 T. Jos., T. Jud. = Testament of Joseph, Judah; the other Testaments are indicated by T. and the first letter of the patriarch
 Sib. Or. = Sibylline Oracles
 Vita = Life of Adam and Eve
 Wisdom = Wisdom of Solomon

2. Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

CDC = Damascus Document (Zadokite Document)
 IQH = Thanksgiving Scroll
 IQM = War Scroll
 IQS = Manual of Discipline

3. Philo; based generally on abbreviations in Philo (LCL), I, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

Conf. = De Confusione Linguarum
 Det. = Quod Deterius Potiori insidiari soleat
 Deus = Quod Deus sit Immutabilis
 Her. = Quis rerum divinarum heres sit
 L. A. = Legum Allegoriarum (I, II, III)
 Mut. = De Mutatione Nominum
 Op. = De Opificio Mundi
 Praem. = De Praemiis et Poenis
 Quest. Gen. = Questiones et Solutiones in Genesin (I-IV)
 Sac. = De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini

4. Rabbinic Sources; based on Danby, Mishnah, p. 806, and Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, pp. 349-352.

A. Zar. = Abodah Zarah

B. B. = Baba Bathra

Ber. = Berakhoth

Ber. R. = Bereshith Rabbah

Erub. = Erubin

Kidd. = Kiddushin

Ned. = Nedarim

P. K. = Pesikta de Rab Kahana (ed. Buber, Lyck, 1868, cited by folio)

P. R. = Pesikta Rabbati (ed. Friedmann, Vienna, 1880, cited by folio)

Sanh. = Sanhedrin

Sukk. = Sukkah

5. Modern Sources

- APAT I, II Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments, ed. E. Kautzsch, 2 vols.
- APOT I, II The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, ed. R. H. Charles, 2 vols.
- BDB Brown, Francis, Driver, S. R., and Briggs, Charles A., A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.
- BJ Bensly, R. L., and James, M. R., The Fourth Book of Ezra.
- Bogaert I, II Bogaert, Pierre, Apocalypse de Baruch, 2 vols.
- Box Box, G.H., The Ezra-Apocalypse (1912).
- Eichrodt I, II Eichrodt, Walther, Theology of the Old Testament, 2 vols.
- Eissfeldt, Intro. Eissfeldt, Otto, The Old Testament: An Introduction.
- GK Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, ed. E. Kautzsch.
- Gunkel Gunkel, Hermann, "Das 4. Buch Esra," in APAT II.
- Harnisch Harnisch, Wolfgang, Verhängnis und Verheissung der Geschichte.
- IDB I-IV Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. G. A. Buttrick, 4 vols.
- Kabisch Kabisch, Richard, Das vierte Buch Esra auf seine Quellen untersucht.
- KB Koehler, Ludwig, and Baumgartner, Walter, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros.

Keulers	Keulers, Joseph, <u>Die eschatologische Lehre des vierten Esrabuches.</u>
KJV	<u>The Authorized King James Version of the Bible.</u>
MF	<u>The Missing Fragment of the Latin Translation of the Fourth Book of Ezra, ed. R. L. Bensly.</u>
Moore I, II	Moore, George Foot, <u>Judaism, 3 vols.</u>
Myers	Myers, Jacob M., <u>I and II Esdras (Anchor Bible).</u>
NEB	<u>The New English Bible.</u>
Oesterley	Oesterley, W. O. E., <u>II Esdras (Westminster Commentaries).</u>
RGG	<u>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. K. Galling., 6 vols.</u>
Rosenthal	Rosenthal, Franz, <u>Vier apokryphische Bücher.</u>
RSV	<u>The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version.</u>
Russell	Russell, D. S., <u>The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic.</u>
Vaganay	Vaganay, Léon, <u>Le problème eschatologique dans le IVe livre d'Esdras.</u>
Violet I	Violet, Bruno, <u>Die Esra-Apokalypse (IV. Esra), I, Die Überlieferung (GCS 18).</u>
Violet II	Violet, Bruno, <u>Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt (GCS 32).</u>
Volkmar	Volkmar, G., <u>Handbuch der Einleitung in die Apokryphen, II, Das vierte Buch Esra.</u>

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INTRODUCTION

When God's care for his people falls short of expectations, a crisis of confidence ensues, and all the more so when this shortfall is compounded into outright disaster. The author of IV Ezra confronted just such a disaster and his agony erupted into the searching dialogue which still stands as a significant attempt to bridge the evident gulf between God's promises and the actual facts of Jewish history.

In the study that follows, an attempt has been made to delineate the author's struggles with the problem of evil. Preliminary to the study of IV Ezra itself, the various "solutions" to the problem of evil which had appeared in antecedent Jewish sources have been surveyed. This survey is contained in chapter I and the use of these "solutions" in IV Ezra is explored in chapter VI.¹ But of primary importance for the proper understanding of the meaning of IV Ezra is the form and structure of the book, and in particular, the

1. Although of considerable interest, Christian documents have not been included in the historical survey, for such cannot properly be considered as "sources" for the author of IV Ezra.

seven-episode scheme and the dialogue format. The significance of these aspects is highlighted especially in chapters II-IV. Chapter II focuses on the history of research as it relates to the significance of the form and structure in IV Ezra, and it describes the current status of IV Ezra research in this respect. Chapter III seeks to demonstrate the significance of the dialogue format, and as a means to that end, compares and contrasts the dialogue elements in IV Ezra and II Baruch. Chapter IV further illustrates the significance of form and structure as it traces in detail the development of the author's argument. Of special interest in chapter IV is the transition from pessimism to guarded optimism which takes place in episode IV. Chapter V builds on the discussion in the preceding chapters of the form and structure of IV Ezra in an attempt to define more precisely the author's theodicy-problem. Finally, in chapter VI, the extent and content of the author's theodicy is discussed and evaluated in terms of the various solutions which were available to him, i.e., those which are outlined in chapter I.

It is hoped that this study will contribute not only to the understanding of IV Ezra as an attempted theodicy, but also to a greater appreciation of the significance of the form and structure of IV Ezra for the meaning of the book.

CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGIN AND DISPERSION OF EVIL, AND THE ATTEMPTS TO FIX RESPONSIBILITY
FOR IT: A SURVEY OF THE SOURCES OF JUDAISM TO CA. A. D. 100.

There are some general aspects of the problem of evil which merit treatment before attention is focused on the various attempts to assign responsibility for it. In the present chapter, the sources are first surveyed for traces of the concept of the universality of physical evil and its possible relationship to a "Fall" of some sort. Where the sources discuss the problem of evil, the aspect of physical evil is generally not singled out for separate comment because of the overriding dominance of the problem of moral evil. But since physical evil is a significant aspect of the total problem, it is given some separate treatment here. Secondly, the evidence for the concept of the universality of moral evil is noted as a preliminary step to the survey of the attempts to assign responsibility for it. For the sake of convenience, the sources used in the survey may be categorized as follows: 1. The Hebrew Scriptures; 2. Jewish sources to ca. A.D. 100 which reflect a predominant Palestinian influence, and on occasion including rabbinic sources insofar as

they can be said to reflect early traditions; 3. Jewish sources to ca. A. D. 100 which reflect a predominant Hellenistic influence. In most cases, treatment of the sources is intended to be rather more selective than exhaustive.¹

A. Physical Evil

1. Universality of Physical Evil

To what extent do the sources portray physical evil as naturally a part of life? As far as the Old Testament is concerned, the creation account in Genesis 1 concludes with the statement that "it was very good" (1:31). But

1. In English, the standard treatment of the sources is F. R. Tennant, The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, New York, 1968 (reprint of 1903 ed.). N. P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin, London, 1927, covers the relevant sources in less detail, and appears to be rather dependent on Tennant. Somewhat the same is true of Samuel Cohon, "Original Sin," HUCA, 21 (1948), pp. 275-330, though he adds additional rabbinic material and points out the differences between the Jewish and Christian teachings on original sin. More recently, Egon Brandenburger, Adam und Christus. Exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Röm. 5:12-21 (1. Kor. 15) (WMANT 7), Neukirchen, 1962, has updated the discussion (pp. 15-67). In the review of the sources, II Bar. and IV Ezra are both mentioned in their appropriate places simply as a means of indicating their points of contact with the literature. Since the views of both books are dealt with in the main body of the study, their titles are placed in parentheses whenever they appear in the table of contents of Chapter I. Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. by Peter Ackroyd, Oxford, 1965, has generally been followed in matters of dating and provenance. The placing of some of the lesser works may be debatable. In the case of Test. Abr., it is included here with the Palestinian sources following the suggestion of B. J. Bamberger, "Abraham, Testament of," IDB I, p. 21, that the Hellenistic features are the result of later interpolation. G. H. Box, The Testament of Abraham, London, 1927, p. xx, thinks the book is of Egyptian (Hellenistic) origin; accordingly in the Translations of Early Documents series, it has been placed with the Hellenistic Jewish Texts; cf. infra, note 112. On the Testaments, see infra, note 169. Limitations of time and space have made it necessary to restrict the historical survey to Jewish sources. The NT and early Christian material is covered in the surveys of Tennant and Williams, noted above, and the Pauline material is dealt with in some detail by Brandenburger (op. cit.).

from Genesis 3 onwards, physical woes are assumed to be a stark reality in human experience. Toil, thistles, and thorns are man's lot until he returns to dust (Gen. 3:17-19). Jacob bemoans the fact that his days have been few and evil (Gen. 47:9); Eliphaz tells Job that man is born to trouble (Job 5:7); Job himself complains that his flesh is clothed with worms and dirt (Job 7:5); and the psalmist laments that he is lonely, afflicted, troubled in heart, distressed, afflicted, hated, and in danger of being put to shame (Ps. 25:16-20). Finally, the pessimistic author of Qoheleth admits that the same fate of death awaits all men (Eccl. 9:2-6).²

As the future hope begins to develop in Israel, there is clear evidence that this rather gloomy state of affairs was expected to change for the better. But even where there is genuine hope for the future and a new heaven and earth promised, death is still expected (Is. 65:20), and the bodies of the dead are to be very much in evidence (Is. 66:24). Furthermore, though the righteous could expect a fine time in the future, the enemies of Jerusalem could expect their own eyes to rot in their sockets and their tongues to rot in their mouths (Zech. 14:12).

The foundation for the total eradication of evil is laid when the apocalyptic writers begin to distinguish between this age and an age to come. The book of Daniel clearly envisages a kingdom for the saints which would stand forever (Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27; 12:1-2), but the attendant circumstances are not indicated clearly enough to warrant any conclusions as to the fate of

2. This same awareness of man's pitiful state in this life permeates the intertestamental literature as well, and is sufficiently self-evident as to make citation unnecessary. One of the most striking examples is IQH from the DSS.

physical evil. The later apocalyptists vividly portray the blessed abode of the righteous where evil is eradicated, but occasionally the righteous are depicted as gloating over the miserable lot of their erstwhile enemies (Ass. Mos. 10:10; I En. 90:27). This parallel existence of bliss for the righteous and agony for the wicked is apparent both in those more purely Jewish sources where it is considered essential that the body be present if rewards are to be meaningful, as well as in those sources which seem to adopt the Hellenistic concept of the immortality of the soul.³ The pharisaic Psalms of Solomon speak of resurrection for the righteous (3:12; cf. 9:5; 13:11; 14:3, 10),⁴

3. The line between the two groups of literature is frequently rather hazy. On the other hand, there are sources which appear to hold to a material resurrection, as well as to continuing torment for the wicked (I En. 27:3; 61:12; 63:1; 67:8-9; II Bar. 30:5; 51:2-6; 4 Ezra 7:36), and, on the other hand, there are sources which seem to think more in terms of an immaterial existence for the righteous, but a rather "material" torment for the wicked (II En. 10:1ff; I En. 103:7-10; Ass. Mos. 10:10; Apoc. Abr. 14, 21 (implied); Test. Abr. 13 (implied)). This ambiguity is also evident at Qumran; see Matthew Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins, London, 1961, pp. 138-142. Sigmund Mowinckel, He that Cometh, trans. by G. W. Anderson, Oxford, 1959, pp. 274-275, points out the Jewish tendency to picture the future in realistic terms. This may contribute to the tendency to depict the future existence of both the righteous and the wicked in rather vivid terms. The sometimes indistinct division between the Messianic Age and the Age to Come is also a factor (cf. George Foot Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of Tannaim, II, New York, 1971 (reprint of 1927-1930 ed.), pp. 313ff), for it has become customary to apply material concepts to the Messianic Age, but more ethereal aspects to the Age to Come. J. Klausner, has made this distinction of fundamental importance in his book, The Messianic Idea in Israel, London, 1956, though he admits that the terms and ideas could often be interchanged, see pp. 408-419. For a discussion of the wide variety of ideas about the future life in intertestamental Jewish sources, see George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr., Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism (Harvard Theological Studies XXVI), Cambridge (Mass.), 1972. Note especially his appendix (pp. 177-180) dealing with Oscar Cullmann's views on immortality and resurrection.

4. D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, London, 1964, p. 369. Nickelsburg (op. cit., p. 134) sees the resurrection hope and eternal life as explicit in ps. 3, but implied in pss. 9, 13, 14, 15. The verse numbering in the text above is that of A. Rahlfs, Septuaginta, and corresponds to the numbers in parentheses in APOT II.

but against the bulk of the intertestamental writings consistently proclaim annihilation for the wicked (Ps. Sol. 3:11-12; 13:11; 14:9; 15:10-13). Apocalyptic writers generally, however, do not present such a tidy solution, preferring to maintain some sort of existence for the wicked so that they may receive their just rewards.⁵ In most cases, the later Jewish sources do not depict a total eradication of physical evil, but rather its relegation to the lower regions or to the third heaven (cf. Apoc. Mos. 37:5; 40:2; II En. 10:1), where the tormented sinners are, in most cases, to be isolated from the righteous. But at least in the case of the Assumption of Moses (10:10), this vestige of physical evil in the form of suffering sinners is a cause for rejoicing on the part of the saints—a counterfoil to their experience of bliss.⁶

2. Relationship of Physical Evil to a "Fall"

It must next be asked: In those sources where the presence of physical evil is assumed, is it related in some way to a "Fall"? If one turns to Gen. 3, it would appear that a primal sin is intended to explain the presence of a certain number of human ills: pain in child-bearing, the toil and sweat necessary to eke out a living from the soil, and perhaps man's fate of death, as well. For purposes of discussion, physical evil may be divided into two aspects: a. death; b. physical evil in general.

5. See Russell, op. cit., p. 375, for comment on the importance of the body in relationship to the receiving of rewards.

6. Cf. John Hick, Evil and the God of Love, London (Fontana Library), 1968, pp. 88-91, for the elaboration of this aspect in its relationship to the Augustinian theodicy.

a. Death: a Result of Sin, or a Natural Expectation?

The relationship of death to sin focuses on the question of man's original status, i.e. was he created as a mortal being? The answer depends on how one understands the relationship between Gen. 2:17 and 3:19. In 2:17, man is threatened with death if he sins, but in 3:19 his return to dust is attributed to the fact that he came from dust, implying his natural mortality. Everywhere else in the OT, death is assumed to be man's natural lot. Since man's eventual fate is death anyway, it can be argued that sin merely brings the threat of a premature death. Yet from a theological point of view, with Genesis 1-3 in its present position at the head of the Pentateuch and the canon, it is difficult to avoid the impression that death was intended to be seen as one of the results of the first sin of the first man. As Gerhard von Rad comments with reference to Gen. 3:19: "Whatever the case of man's mortality or immortality may otherwise have been, this statement would never have been addressed to man in such a way before his sinning, and therefore thematically it belongs with special emphasis to the penalty."⁷ But regardless of the position taken with regards to the exegesis of Genesis 2 and 3, it is significant that the story of the sin of Adam is virtually ignored in the rest of the OT.

The first passage in Jewish sources to clearly link death with the primal

7. Gerhard von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary, rev. ed., Philadelphia, 1972, p. 95. R. H. Charles, APOT II, p. 450n, E. Jacob, "Death," IDB I, pp. 802-803, and Tennant, op. cit., pp. 117-119, all take the view that in Gen. 2-3, as in the balance of OT, it is only a case of premature death. It would appear, that on the basis of Gen. 3:22, one could safely eliminate the option of an original immortal state as a possibility in the interpretation of Gen. 2-3. Thus the question is whether man was created mortal or potentially immortal. See further, W. Vollborn, "Das Problem des Todes in Genesis 2 und 3," ThLZ 77 (1952), cols. 709-714.

sin is Ecclus. 25:24: "From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die." Yet even here there is room for discussion, for Sirach states elsewhere that death is the natural lot of man (cf. 14:17; 17:1-2; 40:11), which, as Charles notes, is contradictory to the statement in 25:24.⁸ Certainly the dominant view of man in Ecclus. emphasizes his frailty and temporality (e.g. 8:7; 10:9; 17:30, 32; 40:1-11; 41:10), though it is not impossible to harmonize these concepts with the statement about the origin of man's condition.

From Hellenistic Judaism, Wisdom of Solomon 2:24 can also be taken to refer to the Genesis account, and it perhaps supports the view that physical death was brought about by the first sin: "But through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it." The crucial question is, does the author refer here to physical death or to spiritual death? His conception of the soul and its relationship to the body makes the answer uncertain. If the author is seen to hold consistently to the view that the soul is immortal (3:1ff; 4:1; cf. 16:14), and that the body is a perishable burden to the soul (9:14ff), then one would have to prefer, with Tennant,⁹ to take the reference in 2:24 to refer to spiritual death, a concept which is found more fully amplified in Philo (L.A. I, 105-108; Det. 48-49).

8. Charles, APOT II, p. 450n.

9. Tennant, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-129. But see Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, New York, 1957, p. 70, who takes the view that physical death is meant in 2:24. So also J. A. F. Gregg (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, Cambridge, 1909, p. 23), but Gregg sees the passage applying to the death of Abel, rather than to the death caused by the primal sin.

But the reference in 8:20 to "an undefiled body" indicates that the author did not consistently view corporeality as an evil in itself, and therefore a sufficient explanation of death. He states elsewhere that: "God did not make death and does not delight in the death of the living" (1:13). The statement in 2:24 is part of a polemic against the views of those who deny immortality to man. These views are cited at length by the author (2:1-20), who then concludes that the righteous will indeed receive immortality (3:1-4). The inference is that only those who belong to the devil's party will really experience death (2:24), for the righteous only seem to have died (3:2). If the death which the righteous seem to die, referred to in 3:2 is physical, as would appear most likely, then the argument is strengthened for considering the death of 2:24 as including at least an element of the physical as well. There are statements in 1:11; 3:16; 4:19; and 5:14 which seem to imply the annihilation of the wicked, but Tennant dismisses these as "figurative hyperbolisms".¹⁰ In any case, it would appear that the author had difficulty adjusting his Hellenistic views to those of Judaism, and perhaps the most that can be said in the present instance is that the author makes statements which can be interpreted to mean that physical death was introduced to mankind by a primal sin.¹¹

In the later apocalypses, the idea of relating physical death to the

10. Ibid., p. 124. In Tennant's words: "This view is precluded by the fact that elsewhere consciousness, memory, and fear are ascribed to these souls after their destruction."

11. For detailed comment on the terms "life" and "death" in Wisdom, see C. Larcher, Études sur le livre de la Sagesse, Paris, 1969, esp. pp. 285-300. Larcher sees physical death as playing a key transitional role which confirms the eternal fate of both the righteous and the wicked (p. 300).

primal sin is fairly commonplace and is stated with sufficient clarity so as to remove any doubt as to the intended meaning. More or less explicit statements are found in the Apocalypse of Moses. (14:2), Life of Adam and Eve (44:2-4), II Enoch (30:16), II Baruch (23:4), 4 Ezra (3:7), Pseudo-Philo (13:8), and in post-Tannaitic rabbinic sources.¹²

b. Physical Evil in General

Turning from death to physical evil in general, one begins to find a direct link between a primal sin and physical evil in the early intertestamental sources. One of the marked characteristics of those sources which see a link between Adam's sin and physical evil, is the tendency to heighten the before-and-after contrast by glorifying Adam's pre-fall state. This tendency to exalt Adam has its "humble beginning" in Ecclus. 49:16.¹³ But from there, the imagination runs riot, reaching its peak in rabbinic sources, though much of the speculation on the topic is post-Tannaitic.¹⁴

12. It is debatable whether or not any of the Tannaim held that Adam brought mortality upon mankind. Tennant, op. cit., p. 162, in dialogue with Ginzberg states: "But that the doctrine which attributed our mortality to Adam was not held by any of the Tannaim is perhaps more than can be proved, though traces of its existence amongst them seem to be extremely rare." Tennant cites one probable reference to physical death in a statement attributed to Akiba (Ber. R. on Gen. 3:7): "Even so did God show to the first of mankind how many generations they had ruined" (loc. cit., note). See ibid., pp. 165ff for post-Tannaitic sources.

13. Ibid., p. 207.

14. See F. Weber, Jüdische Theologie auf Grund des Talmud und verwandter Schriften, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1897, pp. 214-215 for rabbinic sources; cf. also Philo, Op. 26-27, 136, 140-141, 148; II En. 30:8ff; II Bar. 4:3; implied in IQS 4:23 and CDC 3:20 (cf. Black, op. cit., p. 139). See also, Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, Philadelphia, 1947, I, pp. 59-62; V, pp. 78-86 (notes to vol. I).

Because the later sources do tend to relate physical evil to Adam's sin, it is helpful to note the exceptional cases where evil either does not appear to totally permeate the post-fall era, or where conditions are shown to be less than perfect before Adam's sin. In the first instance, the Life of Adam and Eve 31:3 depicts Seth saying rather innocently to Adam as the latter is approaching a painful death: "What is pain?" This provides Adam with the opportunity to explain the circumstances of the first sin. Also in the Life of Adam and Eve (29:2) is the remarkable statement that the tree of knowledge of good and evil imparted the secrets of things to come. A similar idea is found in I Enoch 32:6 (Eth.) where the tree is said to impart wisdom. In both instances, but particularly in the Life of Adam and Eve, the consequences of partaking of the fruit are seen as rather more positive than negative, as is the case in Gnosticism. Attention should also be called to Philo's comments regarding the condition of the Garden of Eden before Adam's sin. Though elsewhere he elaborates on the physical evils consequent upon the first sin, in Quest. Gen. I, 14 (Gen. 2:15), he states that Adam was commanded to guard and keep the garden in order to protect it against wild animals and against the effects of drought and flood.

Even where physical evil is directly linked with sin, the sources sometimes take pains to avoid placing the onus on Adam. This tendency is already present in Ecclus. (25:24) where the woman is blamed. The woman also takes the blame in the Books of Adam and Eve (Vita 3:2-3; 44:2; Apoc. Mos. 10:2; 32:2). In II Enoch 30-31, while Adam is not absolved completely, it is emphasized that sin was introduced by the woman. I Enoch is virtually devoid of speculation about Adam's sin, preferring the tale of the Watchers as an

explanation of evil. There is a specific statement which links physical evil with sin, but it is merely sin in general (80:2-8); Adam is not mentioned. In fact, in 85:3 Adam is transformed into a rather positive figure, namely, the white bull.¹⁵ This viewing of Adam in a positive manner is also evident in the Testament of Abraham (ch. 11) which omits any reference to Adam's sin, giving him a glorified role instead. Not only are the earlier sources divided in their opinion about Adam, the rabbinic sources are of mixed opinions as well: Erubin 18b held him to be a saint, whereas Sanhedrin 38b considered him an atheist.¹⁶ Further complicating the issue, at least as far as rabbinic sources are concerned, is the doctrine of the "merits of the fathers" (zakuth) which holds that a man's fate may be negatively or positively affected by his ancestors, contemporaries, or even by his posterity.¹⁷ Schechter is neverthe-

15. H. J. Schoeps, Jewish Christianity, trans. by Douglas R. A. Hare, Philadelphia, 1969, p. 69, has noted that the Enoch literature makes no mention of the fall of Adam. He sees this tradition continued in the Ebionite Kerygmata Petrou, which transfers the fall to the eighth generation, and in general glorifies Adam. The fully-developed gnostic use of the elements of the Genesis "Fall" accounts is an aspect which falls outside the scope of this survey, but mention may at least be made of the general tendency in the gnostic sources to exonerate Adam and to more fully implicate Eve, while viewing the serpent and the tree of knowledge in a much more positive light. See further, Werner Foerster, Gnosis: A Selection of Gnostic Texts, I, Patristic Evidence, Oxford, 1972, especially the section on the Sethians and the Archontics (pp. 293-305). See also Roger Aubrey Bullard, The Hypostasis of the Archons, Berlin, 1970. For the gnostic background of the rabbinic Adam legends, see A. Altmann, "The Gnostic Background of the Rabbinic Adam Legends," JQR 35 (1944-45), pp. 371-391. See also Ginzberg, op. cit., I, pp. 49-181; V, pp. 63-206.

16. APOT II, p. 42, note on Jub. 19:24.

17. Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, New York, 1961 (reprint of 1909 ed.), pp. 170-198; see also A. Marmorstein, The Doctrine of Merits in Old Rabbinical Literature, London, 1920.

less of the opinion that the rabbis generally held the view that each man is responsible for his own fate. He admits, however, that the one exception to this may be the case of Adam, whose sin caused "death and decay to mankind of all generations."¹⁸

There is an alternative to the Adamic fall as an explanation of physical evil in the world, namely, the fall of the Watchers. Though the story of the fall of the Watchers is perhaps better suited as an explanation of the origin of moral evil in man, it can also serve as an explanation of the origin of physical evil, for the Watchers were commissioned to come and instruct man. This instruction could be beneficial or destructive. In Jubilees, the knowledge imparted by the Watchers is placed in a positive light, for when they were sent to teach man, their teaching was to result in judgment and uprightness on the earth (Jub. 4:15). In the same context, it is told how Enoch was the first to learn writing, knowledge, and wisdom. He also recorded the signs of the heavens for the benefit of future generations (4:17ff). The implication of the present order of the text is that the Watchers had a hand in Enoch's newly acquired skills. In fact, in 4:21, it is stated explicitly that Enoch was with the angels and they taught him everything that was on the earth and in heaven. Jubilees proceeds to describe (4:22) the sin of the Watchers, so it is indeed aware of the negative as well as the positive actions of these heavenly beings. The problem with the Watcher story in Jubilees, however, is that, after the flood, God made "for all his works a new and righteous nature, so that they should not sin in their whole nature

18. Schechter, op. cit., p. 188, citing Eccles. R. 7:13 and Ber. R. 14:6. See Ginzberg, op. cit., I, pp. 75-83 for the rabbinic legends about the punishment for the primal sin.

for ever" (5:12). Thus, the slate was wiped clean after the flood, and in theory, evil would have to begin anew. The Watcher tale figures prominently in I Enoch, too, and here it appears to be a genuine attempt to explain evil, for virtually every contact of the Watchers with man is evil. The sin of the Watchers with the daughters of man is explicitly referred to in numerous passages throughout chaps. 6-16. In 8:1, the knowledge which the Watchers gave to man is related to the sin of man, and in 10:6ff, knowledge acquired from the Watchers is virtually equated with sin, and Azazel is condemned as the author of all sin. In the Similitudes,¹⁹ the revelation of the "secrets" to man by the Watchers is related to man's sin (64:1-2; cf. Noachian frag. 65:6), and one of the specific reasons for the punishments of the Watchers is their giving of knowledge to man, including the gift of writing (69:4ff; but cf. 83:2 where Enoch learns writing!). Two other sections of I Enoch also contain references to the sin of the Watchers: 86:1ff; 106:13ff. In both cases it is the sin of cohabitation with the daughters of men. Thus, although the Watchers have a hand in moral perversion, it is also clear that the "secrets" which they reveal to man bring nothing but trouble. A link is thereby established between the Watchers and the introduction of physical evil.

Turning to specific effects of the "Fall" (primarily the Adamic fall), one can summarize these on the basis of whether the effects were seen to be

19. The failure of any fragments of the Similitudes to surface at Qumran makes a pre-Christian origin for this section of I Enoch rather unlikely. See J. T. Milik, "Problèmes de la littérature hénochique à la lumière des fragments araméens de Qumrân," HTR 64 (1971), pp. 333-378, who dates them as late as A. D. 270 or after (p. 377). Eissfeldt, however, still held to a date before 63 B.C. at the time of the publication of the 1965 edition of his Introduction. See Eissfeldt, Intro., p. 619.

primarily on man, on the lower creatures, or on nature and the cosmos.

i. Effects on Man. Jubilees relates the "Fall" story, but varies little from the account in Genesis. The same effects on man are noted as are included in the biblical account, but considerable emphasis is placed on the element of shame resulting from the first sin (Jub. 3:17ff). Philo enumerates, with embellishments, the results of sin for those who were the first to become slaves of passion: the problems of raising children are the woman's lot, and the toil necessary for the earning of a livelihood falls upon the man (Op. 167). This really adds very little to the Genesis account. The Apocalypse of Moses 14:1-3 and the Life of Adam and Eve 44:1-5 are more-or-less parallel accounts of the results of the primal sin. The shorter passage in Apoc.Mos. mentions simply "great wrath, which is death". The longer account, part of which Wells considers to be an interpolation,²⁰ designates the results of Eve's sin as "a great plague", "sin and transgression for all our generations", and "all evils". Both passages, however, even if stripped to the minimum clearly relate the ills in man's experience to the primal sin. Vita gives no clue, however, as to how this state of affairs is to be correlated with the question placed in the mouth of Seth: "What is pain?" (Vita 31:3). In rabbinic circles, the Amoraim seem to have been much more active in their Adamic speculation than were the Tannaim.²¹ Schechter is of the opinion that the belief in the disastrous effects of Adam's sin for posterity was present in Judaism, but that it was much more prevalent in the

20. L. S. A. Wells, in APOT II, p. 145.

21. Cf. Tennant, op. cit., pp. 161-162, citing Ginzberg. See also note 12, supra.

Christian Church than it was in the synagogue.²² His citations from rabbinic sources are nevertheless quite interesting: when Adam sinned, the voice of God became a terror, Adam lost his power over creation, his stature was diminished, he feared the nearness of the Divine presence, and his face, which originally bore the image of God, became disfigured and hateful.²³

ii. Effects on the Lower Creatures. The sources that single out the lower creatures for special notice are not so numerous as those which touch on evil in general. In Jubilees 3:28 it is mentioned that the beasts lost the power of speech consequent on the sin of Adam. This is apparently a common Jewish belief as a similar idea is found in Josephus (Antiq. I, 50), and in Philo (Quest. Gen., I, 32 [Gen. 3:1]). The Apocalypse of Moses 11:1-3 states that the nature of the beasts was changed and in 24:4 it adds that they rebelled against the rule of man. Bereshith Rabba 19:5 states that the animals incurred death because Eve gave them to eat of the forbidden fruit. Bereshith Rabba also states in 25:2 that the animals were no longer obedient to man.

iii. Effects on Nature and the Cosmos. One of the earlier sources that apparently refers to the effects of the fall on non-sentient nature is Philo: "When evil began to get the better of the virtues, the ever-flowing springs of the bounties of God were closed, that they might not bring supplies to those felt to be undeserving of them" (Op. 168). This statement is in

22. Schechter, op. cit., p. 188n.

23. Ibid., pp. 235-237. The sources which Schechter cites are not particularly early: P.K. 37d; 44b; P.R. 62a; 68b; Ber. R. 11:2; Eccl. R. 8:1. See also Ginzberg, op. cit., I, pp. 75-83.

reference to the increased difficulties that man would experience in extracting the bounties of the earth. In the Life of Adam and Eve 28:4 it states that Michael caused the waters around Paradise to freeze subsequent to the expulsion from the garden, and Apoc. Mos. 20:4 describes how the leaves fell from all the trees except the fig tree as a result of Eve's sin—but in 22:3 it states that they broke into flowers when God entered Paradise. From the rabbinic writings, Bereshith Rabba contains numerous references to the cosmic effects of the primal sin: the light which was created on the first day was such that man could see from one end of the earth to the other, but it was concealed because of the sin of Adam (Ber. R. 11:2); the course of the planets was changed (10:4); the earth and the heavenly bodies lost their brightness (12:6); and in probably the most sweeping statement of all: "As soon as the first man sinned everything became perverted and will no more return to order until the Messiah comes." (12:6).²⁴ The probability that speculations of this sort could very well have had roots in the first century A.D. is strengthened by the statement in Romans 8:18-22 which very openly refers to the effects of sin upon the cosmos. In IV Ezra 7:11ff similar ideas are expressed but these will be dealt with later.

B. Moral Evil

1. Universality of Moral Evil: the Old Testament View

The concept of a radical moral taint permeating human nature is not nearly so obvious in the OT as it is in the literature of later Judaism, and nowhere in the OT is man's evil nature traced back to a primal sin. The

24. The translation is Tennant's, op. cit., p. 151.

significant differences between the OT position and the more developed views of later Judaism and Christianity may be summarized in three statements which describe the OT view: a. Evil is widespread, but not inevitable; b. Evil is universal, but not inherent; c. Evil is congenital, but not linked to a primal sin. Though one could perhaps argue in favor of a slight development towards the later doctrine of original sin,²⁵ the sources are not that easily categorized, and it would probably be more proper to speak of three OT views of moral evil in man, without attempting to place them in a chronological sequence.

a. Evil is Widespread, but not Inevitable

In the first instance, it is instructive to look at the various levels of tradition in the Genesis narratives. Regardless of how one might interpret the implications of Gen. 3, the Yahwistic elements in the primal history do not link Adam's sin with the numerous and tragic outbreaks of moral evil that follow. There is no doubt that the Yahwistic traditions are intended to stress the general diffusion of moral evil (Gen. 4; 6:5-8; 8:21; 9:20-27; 11:1-9), but these episodes are simply individual outbreaks of evil and are said neither to arise as the result of prior sin, nor to impart a

25. Both Tennant (*op. cit.*) and Williams (*op. cit.*) seek to trace the development of the doctrines of the "Fall" and "Original Sin" from simple beginnings in the OT to the fully-matured Augustinian position. Tennant, for example, speaks of "gradual growth in the writings of the Old Testament" (*op. cit.*, p. 97). But as Tennant also points out, even in the Yahwistic elements of Genesis, "necessary constituents" of the later doctrine are to be found (*ibid.*).

taint to human nature.²⁶ The Yahwist fails to develop the theory that Adam's sin permanently twisted man's nature; he depicts Abel as righteous, and makes no reference to inherited evil when dealing with Cain's sin. Evil is portrayed rather as something external to man—"crouching at the door" (Gen. 4:7), and as something which man can control—"you must master it" (Gen. 4:7). The curse of Lamech followed upon his own guilt (Gen. 4:23-24), and the wickedness that preceded the flood is in no way linked with Adam's sin. From ^P ~~J~~, come the statements that Enoch and Noah walked with God, and that Noah was "righteous and blameless" (Gen. 5:24, 6:9). P, as well, nowhere indicates that the image of God was lost as the result of a primal sin.²⁷ Stepping beyond the primal history, one discovers that the patriarchal narratives from all traditions present Abraham as a man of upright character and especially favored by God. Thus throughout the primal history and early patriarchal narratives, evil is seen to have a firm grip upon man, but the notable exceptions demonstrate that evil need not be inevitable.

b. Evil is Universal, but not Inherent

Statements of a more sweeping nature are to be found elsewhere in the OT, which imply that all men are somehow incapable of right behavior, and fall short of God's expectations.²⁸ Jeremiah bemoans the weakness and

26. Cohon, op. cit., p. 281.

27. Cf. ibid., p. 282.

28. It is not always easy to draw a clear distinction between those passages which simply state that sin is universal and those that imply an hereditary taint. Some of the passages listed here begin to point in the direction of an inherited moral bent towards evil.

deceitfulness of the human heart (17:9), both Job and his friends stress the impurity of man and his sinfulness in God's presence (Eliphaz: 4:17; 15:14-16; Bildad: 25:4; Job: 14:4). Yet the prologue to Job states that he was "a blameless and upright man" (1:8; cf. 1:22). There are also OT statements which either bluntly state or clearly imply that there is no man who has not sinned (I Kings 8:46; II Chron. 6:36; Ps. 53:3-4 [EVV 2-3] ; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20). The Psalmist meditates: "If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?" (Ps. 130:3; cf. 143:2); and Isaiah claimed to be a man of unclean lips (Is. 6:5). These passages are realistic about the poverty of man's native abilities, but stop short of making excuses or shifting the blame to an inherited taint.

c. Evil is Congenital, but not Linked to a Primal Sin

Turning specifically to the aspect of hereditary or congenital evil, one discovers some evidence in the OT of an awareness that evil does not simply erupt in the individual ex nihilo. Ps. 58:4 (EVV 3) states: "The wicked go astray from the womb, they err from their birth, speaking lies." There is the implication here of an inherited or congenital taint, but it is not claimed as a universal principle, nor is there an explicit statement of a father-to-son inheritance, and certainly no mention is made of a primal sin. Ps. 51:7 (EVV 5) carries a similar impact: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Here, not only is the Psalmist viewing himself as evil from his birth, but he seems to be implicating his mother as well. Yet he goes on in 51:12 (EVV 10) to ask God to purge him and wash him, and to give him a clean heart and a new and right spirit. Thus whatever taint he may have brought with him into the world may

be washed away and he may stand pure before God. Job 14:4 also implies some sort of a congenital taint in man: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one." The context gives no help in interpreting this passage. While it speaks of man's uncleanness, it does not mention origins, inheritance, or even sin. Clearly there is evidence of disquiet here about man's native abilities, but no formal theory. Furthermore, when this passage is placed beside such statements as are found in II Sam. 22:24, Job 33:9, and Ps. 18:24-25 (EVV 23-24), which claim man's purity before God, one hesitates to generalize about the precise implications.

2. Moral Evil: the Search for an Answer

The evidence from the OT indicates that serious questioning about the origin and transmission of sin was hardly a prominent concern in ancient Israel. One could also say that the closely-related question of theodicy was scarcely a matter for formal discussion in the OT. As Eichrodt colorfully states: "It was not a fruit from the tree of biblical faith."²⁹ That is not to say that questions about God's justice were unknown in Israel, but rather that Israel did not seek the answer to her perplexity in carefully argued, rational solutions. Israel was indeed much aware of innocent suffering, and as Kaufmann has pointed out, the tremendous pathos of Israelite laments is motivated not so much by the human suffering, but rather by the fact that the reputation of her God was at stake.³⁰ Crenshaw³¹ has noted

29. Walther Eichrodt, "Vorsehungsglaube und Theodizee im Alten Testament," Festschrift O. Procksch, Leipzig, 1934, p.45.

30. Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, trans. and abridged by Moshe Greenberg, London, 1961, p.333.

the close parallels between the Babylonian and Israelite manner of dealing with the problem of innocent suffering. In both cases, there were three basic "solutions" proposed to the problem: 1. Man is congenitally evil (cf. Job 4:17; 15:15ff; 25:4-6); 2. The gods are unjust (cf. Job 9:22-24; 24:1-12); 3. Man's knowledge is partial (cf. Job 28).³² These "solutions" are hardly more than a recognition of the problem, and one must delve further to be able to find anything approaching either a genuine rational or experiential resolution of the problem.

In his definitive study on the topic, Eichrodt³³ has shown how Israel turned to the arena of experience, rather than to rational solutions, as the means of coming to grips with the problem of evil. He suggests three ways which Israel used to meet the problem:³⁴ 1. The prophetic message of the God who comes (II Is., II Zech., Ps. 22:23-32 [EVV 22-31]); 2. Escape to the immediate experience of God's presence (Ps. 73; Jer. 15:15-21; Ps. 16); 3. Creation faith, an affirmation of God's awesome power before which man must be silent (Job 38-41). All three methods deal with theodicy-type problems, yet these are not rational arguments, but simply represent vigorous affirma-

31. J. L. Crenshaw, "Popular Questioning of the Justice of God in Ancient Israel," ZAW 82 (1970), p. 387-388. For the Babylonian parallels, Crenshaw refers to W. G. Lambert, Babylonian Wisdom Literature, Oxford, 1960, pp. 21-91, 139-149, and to J. Pritchard, ed., ANET, 1955, pp. 434-440.

32. The last aspect, as Crenshaw points out (op. cit., p. 387), could lend credence to the suggestion that innocent suffering was disciplinary, even purgative; it could also lead to the much later belief that all would be put right in the future.

33. Eichrodt, op. cit., pp. 45-70.

34. Ibid., pp. 64-66. Crenshaw (op. cit., p. 381), gives a concise summary of Eichrodt's conclusions. A longer summary may be found in Eichrodt II, pp. 484-495.

tions of God's power and presence.

With the decline in Jewish national life, the anguish caused by the problem of evil became more acute. Job and Qoheleth are witnesses to the intensity of the problem, but rational methods of dealing with the problem of evil really begin to appear only in the intertestamental sources. These attempts to provide a rational solution may be subsumed under two basic types, based on fundamentally different principles: 1. Those based in some way on a dualistic understanding of the universe and/or man, thus departing from the basic OT approach; 2. Those based on the premise that man is evil congenitally, or by inheritance, thus building on hints already present in the OT.

1. Dualistic systems may be further divided, depending on whether the dualism tends to be essentially religious and ethical, or whether it is predominantly metaphysical. Of the former, Zoroastrianism is probably the most fully-developed example with its cosmic dualism between light and darkness, good and evil, under the leadership of Ormazd and Ahriman, respectively. Man must choose between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, and thus gain eternal bliss or agony. This type of dualism was capable of being at least partially assimilated into Judaism, particularly Palestinian Judaism, as is clear from Qumran. Of the latter type of dualism, Platonism and related Hellenistic systems provide good examples. Here, the contrast tends to be between the immaterial, spiritual, and the good, on the one hand, and the material, physical, and evil on the other. This was approximately the approach adopted with modifications by Philo and Hellenistic Jewish sources generally.

2. Those solutions which attempt to explain evil primarily in terms of heredity concern themselves more with human evil, rather than with the

over-all problem of evil in its cosmic implications. Nevertheless, by delimiting the scope to the human arena, those solutions premised on hereditary evil mesh more comfortably with the OT roots of Judaism than do those solutions which are based on dualistic systems. The two primary theories which build upon hereditary or congenital evil are the theory of "Original Sin" and the theory of the evil yetzer. While both have developed from within Judaism, the former theory was ultimately adopted by catholic Christianity and the latter by rabbinic Judaism. The doctrine of "Original Sin" focuses on the sin of Adam and makes it of gargantuan and pivotal importance. The evil yetzer theory in its fully developed form, shifts the responsibility to God who is said to create two tendencies in man, a good one and an evil one. The evil tendency, when uncontrolled by man, is responsible for leading him into sin.

With this brief survey of the general aspects of the problem of evil, it is now possible to turn more specifically to the development of each of the attempts to affix responsibility for evil. Elements from several theories are often woven into the fabric of any given source, but it is still a helpful exercise to attempt to isolate each theory. In what follows, the development of each theory is traced more or less chronologically, but the series of four theories is ordered logically on the basis of what might be designated as an ideal (hypothetical) theodicy from the biblical point of view, i.e., one in which God is wholly good, and man is wholly responsible for evil. Accordingly, surveyed first is the theory which seeks to maintain that each man himself is responsible for his own evil; secondly, the responsibility at one remove, but still within the human family, namely, placed upon Adam;

thirdly, the responsibility off-loaded to a supernatural evil being, Satan; fourthly, the responsibility placed on God himself, the theory of the evil yetzer. Christianity was ultimately to select elements of the first three theories, including touches of dualism by involving the supernatural being, Satan. In Judaism, particularly Palestinian Judaism, elements of all four can be found, with the emphasis placed on the first and the fourth. In a manner peculiar to Judaism, the responsibility is placed both on God and man, with man finally assuming full responsibility for his own sin because he has not availed himself of the divinely imparted aids for overcoming his evil yetzer. Though there is a certain logic in this sequence, it does not follow that each step represents a distinct historical development at a point in time, nor does each step away from strict individual responsibility necessarily imply a lessening of individual responsibility. In each case, it was quite possible to fix ultimate responsibility for sin at one or more removes from man while maintaining that every man is fully responsible for his own behavior and destiny.

C. Attempts to Fix Responsibility for Evil

1. Individual Responsibility

a. Old Testament

The assumption that every man is responsible for his deeds permeates the OT and the literature of Judaism. Even if one chooses to speak of a development from collectivism to individualism in terms of a more-or-less

chronological model,³⁵ it can still be recognized that within the framework of the collective, the individual remains responsible for his deeds. In the words of Eichrodt:

In interplay with this solidarity thinking we find a living individuality which, as distinct from individualism, is to be understood as the capacity for personal responsibility and for shaping one's own life. This does not stand in mutually exclusive opposition to, but in fruitful tension with, the duty of solidarity, and as such affects the individual and motivates his conduct.³⁶

While Eichrodt recognizes that it is misleading to form antithetical concepts of collectivism and individualism, playing one off against the other,³⁷ he still chooses to emphasize the development from solidarity to individuality, with the real breakthrough for the latter coming with Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Others scholars, such as Kaufmann and Vriezen, emphasize that individual responsibility was never eclipsed by the collective. As Kaufmann puts it: "That a man is requited for his own deeds is a theme of the earliest sources."³⁸ Vriezen, noting that the command to love one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18, cf. vs. 34) is in the second person singular, states that the form of the verb would remain "unaccountable if the individual responsibility of one man for the other had been unknown in Israel."³⁹

35. Cf., for example, Eichrodt II, pp. 231-495.

36. Ibid., p. 232. For a concise statement about "corporate personality" in this connection, see A. R. Johnston, The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God, Cardiff, 1961, pp. 1-13.

37. Eichrodt II, p. 232.

38. Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 330.

39. Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1970, p. 386.

A complicating factor, however, in the understanding of individual responsibility, is the use of the term "retribution". The term is used almost universally to denote the idea that both men and groups receive appropriate rewards for their actions, whether good or bad. But by sharpening the definition of the term, Klaus Koch has contended that a doctrine of retribution has been too readily assumed to be present in the OT.⁴⁰ Koch certainly does not eliminate the concept that a man is responsible for his deeds, but rather by delimiting God's role in the process, he emphasizes the centrality of individual responsibility. Koch's point is that the term "retribution" (Vergeltung) implies a judicial concept which envisages the bestowing of rewards and punishment according to a specific norm.⁴¹ Taking representative sections of Proverbs, along with Hosea as a sample of prophetic thought, and certain of the Psalms, he contends that he does not find such a concept, but rather the idea of the "fate-determining deed" (die schicksalwirkende Tat). Just as the plant naturally grows from the bud, so the deed returns its own reward.⁴² On those occasions when Yahweh does enter the equation, he serves

40. Klaus Koch, "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?", ZThK 52 (1955), pp. 1-42. Citing such scholars as Eichrodt and Gunkel who assert that the concept of retribution was present from the very beginning of the Israelite religion, Koch complains (p.1f) that prior to his own study, no one had taken the trouble to make a scholarly study of the subject. Only L. Köhler (Theol. d. AT, 2nd Germ. ed., p. 200) had apparently noted the lack. Würthwein ("Der Vergeltungsglaube im AT," ThW IV, p. 711) begins his study characteristically: "Since the belief in retribution can be observed throughout the Old Testament...." See Koch, pp. 1-2 for details.

41. Koch, op. cit., p. 4.

42. Ibid., p. 31. A helpful summary of the first part of Koch's study is given on pp. 31-32.

merely as a catalyst, to ensure that the reaction follows through to completion (Proverbs),⁴³ or as the essential element without which the process does not take place at all (Psalms).⁴⁴

As helpful as Koch's study is in determining the role which both Yahweh and the individual play in what has heretofore been designated as a retribution model, there seems to be no concise way of describing the process apart from the term "retribution", unless one adopts the German phrase (or phrases) which Koch himself has coined. Perhaps it would be admissible then, to retain the term "retribution", while simply recognizing that its usage with judicial connotations is valid within the context of biblical studies, only when one comes to a much later era in Judaism. It is in the development of post-exilic Judaism that one finds a clearly defined justitia distributiva, "a deplorable narrowing of outlook".⁴⁵

That a man is held to be responsible for his deeds is so self-evident in every strand of the OT that citations to prove it are hardly necessary. Whether one turns to the primeval history, the patriarchal narratives, the priestly, prophetic, or wisdom literature, it is everywhere evident that the individual man is accountable for his actions. Special note should be made, however, of those passages which portray man's fate as being determined for him in spite of his individual stance. For example, a man may be doomed because of the actions of his family, clan, or nation. The OT portrays the

43. Ibid., pp. 2-10 for discussion.

44. Ibid., pp. 16-22.

45. Richrodt II, p. 487.

condemnation of children "unto the third and fourth generation", as being quite normal and expected.⁴⁶ Even the famous chapter 18 of Ezekiel cannot be taken simply as a denial of this connection between a man's fate and the guilt of his fathers.⁴⁷ In spite of the definiteness with which the concept of individual responsibility is proclaimed in ch. 18, Ezekiel clearly shows elsewhere that the idea of a collective retribution stemming from the guilt of Israel's fathers is still very much alive (e.g., chaps. 16, 20, 23).

It must be noted, however, that even though collective retribution for the sins of an individual can be accepted, at times, as the normal state of affairs, there are voices of dissent that are raised in protest against the innocent being made thus to suffer. In the story of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, this poignant cry is found: "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be angry with all the congregation?" (Num. 16:22). Likewise after David's sin in numbering the people, he cries out: "It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done?" (I Chron. 21:17; cf. II Sam. 24:17). Yet, while there is a trend away from collective retribution in the later portions of the OT, there is also a reaction very much in evidence against the facile application of a theory of retribution. On the one hand, Qoheleth is

46. Ibid., p. 239. This is so at least during Israel's earlier history.

47. Ibid., p. 485. Ez. 18 should rather be seen in the light of Ezekiel's pastoral responsibility as he seeks to establish God's absolute justice, even with respect to the individual. In the words of Vriezen, it "serves to combat the tragic view of life, the self-pity of the exiles, a notion that may spring from a one-sided moral collectivism and prevents true consciousness of guilt" (op. cit., p. 387).

clearly aware of the fact that the rewards frequently don't match the deeds (Eccl. 7:15; 8:14). On the other hand, Job represents a reaction to the tendency to turn the theory of retribution into a fail-safe formula for determining the guilt of the sufferer. Furthermore, one of the important contributions of the book of Job is the recognition that God can still be God, and be recognized as such by man regardless of the obvious failure of a neat theory of rewards.

Whatever factors may qualify the concept of individual responsibility in the OT, it is clear that none of them effect any lessening of that responsibility. Where the collective seems to take precedence over the individual, the individual remains important. In fact, in a certain sense, he is even more important because of the great impact that his individual deed can have on the community. When complaints are raised in the OT about apparent injustices in man's experience, none of the complaints are formulated in such a way so as to suggest a mitigation of man's responsibility. Both Job (14:4) and his "friends" (4:17; 25:4) claim the universality of sin, but stop short of deducing that man is thereby incapable of obedience, and accordingly less guilty. Ps. 51, likewise, while referring to the all-encompassing nature of sin, shows no tendency to make this state of affairs an excuse for lessening man's guilt. Nevertheless, the possibility is open for the development of these embryo complaints into excuses for sin, and arguments against man's freedom to choose, thus making man less than responsible for his own destiny. The development of these tendencies will be noted in their turn, yet in those sources where these tendencies do exist, one can frequently find statements which emphatically assert man's freedom to decide and his responsibility for his own acts and fate. It should also

be noted that where disobedience is threatened with punishment, or where man is simply admonished to obey, there is the implication that man has sufficient freedom to obey and is seen to be responsible for determining his own destiny. With this in mind, two aspects are of particular interest in the survey of the sources below. Rather than belabor the obvious, special attention is paid, first of all, to those passages which seem to be polemic against rising fatalistic views of man. Secondly, sources are noted which specifically cite possible causes for man's sin other than his own free choice, yet which maintain man's freedom and responsibility as unimpaired.

b. Palestinian Jewish Sources

i. Ecclesiasticus. One of the early intertestamental sources to emphatically teach that man is free and responsible is Ecclus. Interestingly enough, according to Tennant,⁴⁸ Ecclus. provides the oldest doctrinal exegesis of the Fall. Likewise in Ecclus., there are firm hints of the rabbinic doctrine of the evil yetzer. Both of these aspects will be dealt with below, so detailed analysis is unnecessary here. What is significant for the point presently under discussion is the emphasis with which the author states that man is free and responsible. In 8:5 it is stated that "we all deserve punishment"; in 15:11-20, one of the passages which involves the usage of the evil yetzer, Ecclus. teaches that "to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice" (15:15), and: "Before a man are life and death, and whichever he chooses will

48. Tennant, op. cit., p. 107.

be given to him" (15:17). In 16:12 it is stated that God "judges a man according to his deeds." In view of the later rabbinic teaching which equates Satan with the evil yetzer,⁴⁹ 21:27 is of particular interest: "When an ungodly man curses his adversary, he curses his own soul." Present evidence suggests that neither the "Fall" doctrine nor the evil yetzer doctrine could have gained sufficient ground so as to constitute a serious threat to "orthodoxy" at this point, but the vigor with which Sirach speaks for individual responsibility could easily pass for polemic.

ii. Tobit. The book of Tobit may also be mentioned in conjunction with Ecclus., for in spite of its developed demonology, Tobit is quite similar to Ecclus. in its thought and ethical teachings. Both in 3:1-6 and in 14:4ff, it is implied, that evil is a consequence of sin. Tennant considers Tobit to be one of the sources which gave impetus to the view that all evil results from sin.⁵⁰

iii. I Enoch. In I En. 98:4-5 there are two noteworthy statements relating to human responsibility for sin and evil: "Sin has not been sent upon the earth, but man himself has created it, and under a great curse shall they fall who commit it. (5) And barrenness has not been given to the woman, but on account of the deeds of her own hands she dies without children."

49. R. Simon b. Lakish in B.B. 16a: "Satan and Yezer and the Angel of Death are one." Cited by Schechter, op. cit., p. 244. Schechter also notes (ibid.) the Targum to Zech. 3 which renders Satan by שׂטן . See Schechter, pp. 242-263 for further citations and discussion.

50. Tennant, op. cit., p. 121.

As Brandenburger has pointed out, this passage has a clear polemical ring to it.⁵¹ This may be linked with the interesting fact that the damaging effects of Adam's sin are virtually ignored in I En.⁵² Although the Enoch literature shows no tendency to shift responsibility to Adam, it certainly does not hesitate to share some of the responsibility with the Watchers, for it portrays the Watchers as playing an important part in the introduction of evil to man.

iv. Dead Sea Scrolls. The DSS present an unusual situation in the way in which they deal with human responsibility. Man's freedom to determine his own destiny is hardly a marked characteristic of the scrolls of Qumran. In the DSS, particularly in IQM, and to a lesser extent in IQS, a sharp cosmic dualism predominates. But in spite of a highly deterministic interpretation of human experience, man's freedom and responsibility are not entirely neglected. This is brought out most clearly in CDC. Though the deterministic element is present (2:3-13), man must still "hold fast" (3:20), and when he goes astray, it is because he has "chosen the stubbornness of his heart" (8:8). As Vermes points out, one of the aims of the author of CDC was to demonstrate from Israel's history that "fidelity is always rewarded and apostasy chastised."⁵³ Elsewhere in the scrolls, human responsibility seems to be present by implication, more than by explicit statement. In IQS, for example, elaborate entry rules, the need for close discipline, and the obvious possibility

51. Brandenburger, op. cit., p. 24. So also Milik, op. cit., p. 364.

52. Cf. supra, note 15.

53. Geza Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, Harmondsworth (Penguin Books), 1968, p. 96.

of exclusion from the community for misconduct, all point towards a sense of individual responsibility. In addition, it should be noted that the community was peopled by "volunteers", which seems rather strange in view of the deterministic philosophy of the community, yet it illustrates how difficult it is to completely eliminate the element of human freedom and responsibility within a religious community which seeks a high level of ethical attainment.⁵⁴

v. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. The Testaments share some of the essential characteristics of the DSS, namely, the frequent occurrence of Beliar (Belial) and the usage of an embryo evil yetzer concept. But there is a marked contrast in the way the Testaments emphasize the importance of individual freedom of choice. Not only does the exhortation and warning which pervades the Testaments imply a sense of individual responsibility, but there are explicit statements, as well. For example, T. Jud. 20:2 speaks of the "spirit of understanding" which may choose the spirit of truth or of deceit as it wills.

vi. The Books of Adam and Eve. The Books of Adam and Eve merit a brief comment here because of the manner in which man's responsibility is maintained in spite of the damaging effects of the devil's attacks and the failures of Adam and Eve. A citation from each book will suffice to give the trend. In the Apocalypse of Moses 28:4, in the narrative about Adam's exclusion from the Tree of Life, he is instructed to keep himself from evil and he will one

54. The point has been made by J. P. Hyatt, "The View of Man in the Qumran 'Hodayot'," NTS 2 (1955-56), p. 283.

day have access to the tree again. In Vita 29:10 is the statement: "Happy shall the man be, who hath ruled his soul, when the Judgment shall come to pass...." There is clearly a certain amount of tension here, for, while Adam and Eve (especially Eve) have brought dire consequences upon mankind, man is still expected to determine his own destiny.

vii. IV Ezra, II Baruch, Rabbinic Sources. From Palestinian Judaism, there remains simply to mention in passing the views of IV Ezra, II Baruch, and the rabbinic sources. II Baruch 54:19 is usually taken as one of the clearest expressions of individual responsibility in the later Jewish sources: "But each of us has been the Adam of his own soul." Many scholars have taken the view that Baruch is polemic against the fatalistic views expressed in IV Ezra. This aspect will be taken up in detail later, but suffice it to say at this point, that the view taken here is, that it can be demonstrated that IV Ezra does maintain the viability of individual responsibility. The element of pessimism is stronger in IV Ezra than in II Baruch, but whatever complaints Ezra raises, he does not claim that man's responsibility has been eroded. One could perhaps say, at the risk of a contradiction, that Ezra sees man's freedom as somewhat restricted, but his responsibility for his sins as undiminished. This emphasis on human responsibility is quite in keeping with the rabbinic view in general. One of the more forthright statements of human freedom in rabbinic sources is in Tanḥuma, Pikkude 3: "God does not determine beforehand whether a man shall be righteous or wicked, but puts this into the hands of the man only."⁵⁵ Schechter, in his discussion of the evil

55. Cited by Weber, op. cit., p. 216. The translation is by Charles, APOT II, p. 449, who is citing Weber's first ed., p. 208. Charles calls it the "strongest statement of free will" (APOT II, loc. cit.).

yetzer teaching among the rabbis, concludes that, in general, man is considered fully responsible for overcoming the evil yetzer, and success is simply a matter of choice.⁵⁶

c. Hellenistic Jewish Sources⁵⁷

i. Wisdom of Solomon. The book of Wisdom contains an interesting passage in which evil is personified as a personal adversary (Philo, by contrast, nowhere personifies "the principle of evil"⁵⁸). Yet this hint of a personal devil in Wisdom 2:24 is certainly not one of the fundamental pillars of the book, and it does not affect the author's firm conviction that man is responsible for sin. A doctrine of retribution is present throughout, and it is explicitly stated that man deserves his punishment (12:15; 16:9).

ii. Philo. Philo's view of man's freedom and responsibility is complicated by his conviction that "phenomenality is the source of moral evil."⁵⁹ Yet for all the distress that the physical nature is said to bring upon man,

56. Schechter, op. cit., pp. 270-271

57. In addition to the sources discussed in the text, mention could also be made of the third book of the Sib. Or., but it adds nothing significant to the subject. It is permeated with the concepts of retribution and admonition, both of which imply personal responsibility. No mitigating elements of any significance are introduced.

58. Tennant, op. cit., p. 129. In other words, Philo makes no use of a personal devil or Satan figure.

59. Tennant, op. cit., p. 137. What follows is based largely on Tennant, pp. 131-142 (with verified sources). Cf. also J. Drummond's statements about Philo's concept of free will, in Philo Judaeus, I, London, 1888, pp. 346-350.

it is relatively clear that Philo sees the seat of sin in the "mind" or "reason" (Quest. Gen., I, 13 [Gen. 2:14]; II, 12 [Gen. 7:2-3]; II, 18 [Gen. 7:11]).⁶⁰ Perhaps it would not be too far wrong to say that Philo sees the body as the source of sin, but that sin cannot predominate unless the mind gives consent. Given the nature of man's constitution, perfect virtue is practically unattainable (Mut. 47-51; Sac. 111), and no mortal is free from defilement, even if he should live but a day (Mut. 48). Yet for all that, man's freedom is unimpaired (Deus 47). So whatever inconsistencies there may be in Philo arising from his attempt to wed Judaism and Greek philosophy, he still maintains that man is free and responsible.

iii. II Enoch. Slavonic Enoch, which probably originated in an Alexandrian milieu some time before A.D. 70,⁶¹ has one interesting passage which has a particular bearing on the concept of individual responsibility:

30:15-16 And I called his name Adam, and showed him the two ways, the light and the darkness, and I told him: "This is good, and that bad," that I should learn whether he has love towards me or hatred, that it be clear which in his race love me. (16) For I have seen his nature, but he has not seen his own nature, therefore through not seeing he will sin worse....⁶²

60. The terms "mind" and "reason" are Tennant's (*op. cit.*, p. 137). What he apparently means in the light of the statements cited from Philo, is, that the rational element in man holds the key to "good" and "evil". Man can decide either to capitulate to the passions or to stand firm against them.

61. Eissfeldt, *Intro.*, p. 623, states that the present book is undoubtedly of Christian origin, but that it is probably based on an older Jewish original dating from before A. D. 70.

62. Underlining represents italics in the APOT II translation. The passage is only extant in the longer recension "A", which may be Christian, stemming from the fifth century if Schmidt is right. See N. Schmidt, "The Two Recensions of Slavonic Enoch," *J. Amer. Or. Soc.* 41 (1921), pp. 307-312; cited by Albert-Marie Denis, *Introduction aux pseudepigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament*, Leiden, 1970, p. 28. The translation in APOT II appears to be a rather free

Clearly the author assumes man to have free will and to be responsible for his actions, but his fate is adversely affected by ignorance. Charles sees traces here of Platonic thought; thus he thinks the author would view the soul as originally created good and in no way predetermined for good or evil, but its incorporation into a body tended to bias it in the direction of evil.⁶³ Porter reacts vigorously against Charles' point of view and Charles' tendency to read Hellenistic concepts into II Enoch. Porter interprets the passage as follows: 'His [man's] moral duty is to choose the light, and because he chooses darkness he must die (30:15-16). This sin is traced to his free choice, but never to his dual nature. Neither is the body the cause of Adam's sin, nor is Adam's sin the cause of the sinful nature of man.'⁶⁴ One controversial point that cannot be easily solved is the meaning of ignorance in 30:16. Charles suggests that it was ignorance of man's own nature which is composed of his two inclinations.⁶⁵ Porter grants that possibility, but cites an interesting conjecture by Bonwetsch: "I saw his nature, but he did

one. The relevant part of 30:16 is rendered by Morfill as: "I knew his nature, but he did not know his nature. Therefore his ignorance is a woe to him that he should sin...." See W. R. Morfill and R. H. Charles, The Book of the Secrets of Enoch, Oxford, 1896, p. 42. Bonwetsch renders as follows: "Ich aber sah seine Natur, er aber kannte nicht seine Natur. Deswegen ist Unwissenheit das Uebel des Sündigens, weil ("dass"?) ihm zu sündigen ist." See G. N. Bonwetsch, Die Bücher der Geheimnisse Henochs. Das sogenannte slavische Henochbuch, herausgegeben, TU 44 (XIX, 1922), p. 29.

63. Charles, APOT II, p. 450, note to II En. 30:16.

64. F. C. Porter, "The Yezer Hara: a Study in the Jewish Doctrine of Sin," Biblical and Semitic Studies (Yale University), New York, 1901, p. 156.

65. APOT II, p. 450n.

not see my nature."⁶⁶ But regardless of how ignorance is conceived, nothing in the context suggests that it lessens man's moral responsibility to choose between the right and wrong that has been set before him.

In summary, it can be said that almost without exception, the Jewish sources through the first century A. D. maintain the importance of human freedom and responsibility. The closest thing to an exception would appear to be the Qumran scrolls, but even here, there is vestigial evidence for a concept of human responsibility. Furthermore, even when the ultimate responsibility for evil is placed at one or more removes from man, human responsibility for determining one's own destiny can still be affirmed.

2. Responsibility Placed on Adam (or Eve)

a. Old Testament: Genesis 3

The tendency to make Adam responsible for human sinfulness was apparently an intertestamental development within Judaism. The paradise narratives in Gen. 2 and 3 give no hint whatsoever that Adam's sin resulted in a radical modification of his moral being which was then passed on as a permanent inheritance to his posterity.⁶⁷ The account in Gen. 3 presents a certain number of physical ills as resulting directly from the fall, but in terms of man's moral

66. Porter, op. cit., p. 156. Source of Bonwetsch conjecture is apparently Das slavische Henochbuch, Berlin, 1896. One aspect that both Charles and Porter have failed to pick up is the possible gnostic influence suggested by the term "ignorance". This would be all the more likely if recension "A" is a fifth century production as suggested by Schmidt (op. cit.).

67. Cf. Tennant, op. cit., pp. 1-21; Williams, op. cit., pp. 39-51; Brandenburger, op. cit., pp. 15-17.

nature, all that can be said is that this sin was the first instance of human rebellion against divine authority. Yet even that aspect is hardly explicit, but is rather implied by the present order of the narratives in Gen. 1-11.

b. Early Palestinian Jewish Sources

i. Ecclesiasticus. After discussing possible allusions to Gen. 3 in the balance of the OT,⁶⁸ Tennant states that the oldest exegesis of the Gen. 2-3 account is to be found in Ecclus.⁶⁹ It does not contain a great deal of comment, to be sure, but what there is, begins to show some tendency towards the later doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin. There are four passages of particular interest: 14:17; 25:24; 40:1; 49:16.

14:17 All living beings become old like a garment,
for the decree from of old is, "You must surely die!"

Ecclus. makes it clear elsewhere that man's natural and expected destiny is death, but here there is a hint of death as a punishment which affected all men (cf. also 41:3). This hint is developed further in the next passage of significance:

25:24 From a woman sin had its beginning,
and because of her we all die.

The second line affirms a causal relation between the primal sin and death, but the Greek of the first line is ambiguous. The term ἀρχή may be translated either in a temporal or causal sense. The Hebrew, however, inclines toward the temporal understanding (אֵת הַפֶּה הַשֵּׁנִי), yielding the meaning that Eve was the first to sin, not the cause of all later sin.⁷⁰ Furthermore, as

68. Tennant, op. cit., pp. 90-96.

69. Ibid., p. 107.

70. See ibid., pp. 111-113 for full discussion.

Tennant has remarked, the real cause of sin in Ecclus. is the evil yetzer, making it unlikely that the author would also attribute the cause of sin to Adam or Eve.⁷¹

40:1 Much labor was created for every man,
and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam,
from the day they come forth from their mother's womb
till the day they return to the mother of all.

This passage opens a section of 11 verses (40:1-11) which describes the hard lot that the "sons of Adam" must endure. Included are physical as well as moral disorders, but the causal link with a primal sin is missing.

49:16 Shem and Seth were honored among men,
and Adam above every living being in the creation.

This passage concludes the long section (chaps. 44-49) in praise of famous men and the fathers of Israel. Remarkably, Adam is missing (as is Seth) from the head of the list, which actually begins with Enoch. But in view of the fact that the author concludes his paean of praise with an appropriate tribute to the father of all, the earlier omission should perhaps not be considered as an intentional slight occasioned by embarrassment over Adam's posterity-dooming sin.

None of the above passages shows any tendency to mitigate man's responsibility because of a primal sin. As indicated earlier, Ecclus. emphatically affirms the importance of free will and man's responsibility. Whatever awareness he shows of an embryonic "Fall" theory has no real bearing on man's responsibility to his maker.

71. Ibid., p. 113. But it should be noted that the author of IV Ezra apparently saw no problem in linking the Adam and yetzer theories together.

ii. I Enoch. Several of the early Palestinian sources are significant for what they don't say, rather than for what they contribute to the theory of an Adamic fall. I Enoch, for example, clearly prefers the account of the Watchers as an explanation for human depravity. There is just the barest mention of the adventures of Adam and Eve in 32:3-6. In the Garden of Righteousness, the tree of Wisdom is identified for Enoch by Raphael. Although both the expulsion from the garden and the discovery of their nakedness are attributed to eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, within the narrative itself, the tree is treated positively as a genuine asset in the garden.⁷² In 69:6 a reference to Eve occurs: Gadreel "led Eve astray", but the incident is simply one of the many sins of the Watchers. In 85:3, the white bull clearly represents Adam, and in 93:4 (Apocalypse of Weeks), sin is only said to arise in the second week, i.e., after Enoch.

iii. Jubilees. In Jubilees, the relevant passage is 3:17ff, yet very little is added to the Genesis account of the first sin. Adam's role is in no way magnified, and the essential result of that sin was to bring shame to

72. The effects of eating of the fruit are mentioned only by the Ethiopic. An Aramaic fragment from Qumran (4QHen^e) containing 32:3 has been published by J. T. Milik in "Henoch au pays des aromates (ch. XXVII-XXXII). Fragments arameens de la grotte 4 de Qumran," RB 65 (1958), pp. 70-77, but the crucial verse which refers to Adam and Eve (32:6) has not been recovered in Aramaic according to an oral communication to the writer from Matthew Black, co-editor of the forthcoming edition of the Aramaic Enoch fragments. The Aramaic fragment of 32:3 is too brief to include the phrase which speaks of the tree of wisdom. The Ethiopic of 32:3 speaks of the "tree of wisdom" which imparts "wisdom". The Greek of 32:3 speaks of the "tree of wisdom" (δένδρον φρονήσεως — Charles, in APOT II, p. 207, renders as "tree of knowledge") which imparts "great wisdom" (φρόνησιν μεγάλην — Charles renders as "great wisdom"). In 32:6, the Ethiopic implies that Adam and Eve are still alive, and goes on to elaborate on the effects of eating of the fruit of the tree. The Greek, however, simply speaks of the "tree of wisdom of which your father ate".

man (3:21-22), and the loss of the gift of speech to the animals (3:28).

iv. Dead Sea Scrolls. The DSS also seem to avoid Adamic fall speculation. In IQS 4:23 and in CDC 3:20, with reference to the eschatological restoration, the phrase occurs: "All the glory of Adam shall be theirs." But this same phrase can just as well be translated as the "glory of man".⁷³ Given the rather low estimate placed upon man by the scribes of the community, however, especially as expressed in IQH, it seems more likely that the phrase in question would refer to the restoration of Adam's Urzeit glory.⁷⁴ Accordingly, the DSS would fit in with the Enoch tradition which tends to minimize Adam's sin, and indeed, tends to glorify Adam instead. Also in the DSS there is a passing reference to the Watchers' sin (CDC 2:17-18), but it is not prominent as the community's answer to the problem of evil. It would appear that Qumran tended to prefer the Belial and/or evil yetzer tradition as an explanation for human evil.

v. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. In the Testaments, there is an awareness of the Adamic fall theory as well as that of the fall of the Watchers. In T. Levi 18:10-11 salvation is said to consist of the removal of the flaming sword so that man can have access to the tree of life, thus implying that the Gen. 3 account is the real fall. In T. Reub. 5:5-7 and T. Naph. 3:5 there are variants on the Watcher theme, but as is the case with the DSS, the Testaments prefer the Beliar and/or evil yetzer traditions as the means of

73. So Eduard Lohse, Die Texte aus Qumran: Hebräisch und deutsch, München, 1964, p. 17 (IQS 4:23); p. 73 (CDC 3:20).

74. Cf. Black, op. cit., p. 139.

explaining the problem of evil.

It would appear, then, that from the pre-Christian Palestinian Jewish sources, only Ecclus. presents any firm evidence for advance on the Genesis account of the Fall, and even this is a rather minimal advance.

c. Hellenistic Jewish Sources

Adamic fall speculation is also rather sparse in the earlier sources from Hellenistic Judaism. In some respects, Hellenism had less need to explain man's sinfulness, for a metaphysical dualism was readily available as at least a partial answer. Nevertheless, the biblical account of the first sin makes a certain impact.

i. Wisdom of Solomon. In the Wisdom of Solomon there are several elements of the later doctrine of the Adamic fall, though not in any organized form. Most noticeable is the following statement:

2:24 But through the devil's envy death entered the world,
and those who belong to his party experience it.

The aspect of death has been discussed already, but the "devil's envy" is noteworthy. It is usually taken as the first clear reference in Jewish literature which identifies the serpent of Genesis 3 with the devil.⁷⁵ But it could also refer to the sin of the Watchers, and it has even been suggested that it is a reference to the sin of Cain.⁷⁶ This much is clear, though,

75. Tennant, op. cit., p. 128. So also Reider, op. cit. p. 70.

76. Reider (ibid.) states that this view was suggested by H. Bois, Essai sur les origines de la philosophie Judéo-Alexandrine, Toulouse, 1890, p. 297. Tennant (op. cit., p. 128) takes issue with Bois. Arguments in favor of Bois's suggestion are offered by Gregg, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

that a primal sin had a disastrous effect on mankind. Yet the author is capable of speaking of an "undefiled body" (8:20), i.e., one not defiled by Adam's sin. It may also be significant that in 10:1, Adam is said to be delivered from his transgression by Wisdom. Thus his sin is quite capable of being remedied. This same passage goes on to attribute the flood to the sin of Cain (10:3-4), a view also accepted by Josephus (*Antiq. I*, 65-66).⁷⁷ Wisdom therefore avoids placing the responsibility for sin upon Adam. Yet the element of inherited evil may very well be implied in 12:10-11 in a discussion of the sins of the Canaanites: "Their origin (*γένεσις*) was evil and their wickedness inborn." This is the type of thinking that could develop into the Adamic fall theory, but in Wisdom, the connection with Adam is missing.

ii. Philo. Philo's views on human sinfulness resemble, in several ways, those of Wisdom. As in Wisdom, Adam's sin is rather insignificant in comparison with Cain's (*Quest. Gen. I*, 81 [Gen. 5:3]); also, there is evidence that evil moral qualities could be inherited (*Conf.* 128), but just as in Wisdom, a doctrine of original sin is not fully deduced. In fact, every man is even considered to be morally neutral at first, thus resembling Adam in his original state (*Praem.* 62; *Her.* 294). Interestingly enough, Philo exalts Adam in his pre-fall state in much the same way as Palestinian haggadists do, who then draw the contrast with his degraded post-fall condition. In Philo's case, however, he clearly sees Adam as the most perfect of men, and all other men can only be inferior as the copy is inferior to the original

77. Cited by Tennant, *op. cit.*, p. 130, note, but it is rather more implicit than explicit in Josephus.

(Op. 140-141). This is likely to be understood only in a physical sense, and "in no way implies that degeneracy is due to an inherited moral taint or infirmity."⁷⁸ Thus it is rather clear, that, while Philo produces much in the way of Adamic speculation, he does not belong to the tradition which places responsibility for human sinfulness on Adam. And certainly, he would view man's freedom as operative and necessary (Op. 81; L.A. I, 35).

iii. II Enoch. Slavonic Enoch is one source of probable Hellenistic provenance which does seem to attribute human sinfulness to the disobedience of Adam and Eve. There are three passages in II Enoch which include speculation about Adam and Eve: 30:13-18; 31:1-8; 41:1. These passages all occur in recension "A" only, raising the question of possible later interpolation.⁷⁹ In any case, Cohon has rather overstated the case when he claims that II Enoch is the first to teach that "sin is transmitted from Adam."⁸⁰ The crucial verses in the first passage (30:15-16) have been touched on previously. They can hardly be taken as firm evidence of a theory of an inherent bent towards evil transmitted from Adam. The intent of 31:6-8 is perhaps even more obscure than 30:15-16. First of all, it states that the devil seduced Eve, but did not touch Adam. Then God cursed ignorance.⁸¹ But it specifically states that he did not curse man, the earth, or the other creatures, but only man's

78. Ibid., p. 141. See also the numerous passages from Philo cited by Tennant on pp. 139-141.

79. See above, note 62.

80. Cohon, op. cit., p. 288, as also Williams, op. cit., p. 55. Brandenburger, op. cit., p. 42, is of the opinion that the text does not explicitly teach that the sin of Adam or Eve is the cause of all sin.

81. Note that both 30:16 and 31:7 speak of "ignorance", suggesting gnostic influence.

evil fruit and his works. On the basis of this passage, it would be easier to say that physical evil came from Adam, than to claim that moral evil was the result of Adam's (or Eve's) sin. Also problematical is the third passage, which describes the state of affairs in the lowest hell:

41:1 And I saw all forefathers from all time with Adam and Eva, and I sighed and broke into tears and said of the ruin of their dishonour: "Woe is me for my infirmity and for that of my forefathers."⁸²

First of all, it is not clear whether the ruin is caused only by Adam and Eve, or whether perhaps also by the other forefathers as well. Secondly, this passage need not be taken to mean anything more than simply the physical destruction caused by sin.⁸³ If, however, one would be willing to admit a cumulative effect of sorts, then this passage (along with the others in II En., and those in the Books of Adam and Eve and IV Ezra) is a pointer in the direction of a theory of an Adamic fall which is the cause of all human sinfulness.

d. Late Palestinian Jewish Sources

i. The Books of Adam and Eve. In the Life of Adam and Eve and in the Apocalypse of Moses there are explicit statements linking human sinfulness with the primal sin. The chief villain is Eve. Adam is treated with rather

82. Underlining represents italics in APOT II translation. Bonwetsch (1922, p. 38) renders "Ewigkeit" for "all time".

83. Morfill (op. cit., p. 56) emphasizes the causative aspect in his translation of 41:1: "I sighed and wept, and spake of the ruin (caused by) their wickedness." APOT II leaves the statement ambiguous by retaining the simple genitive: "ruin of their dishonour". Bonwetsch (1922, p. 38) also retains the ambiguity: "Verderben ihrer Gottlosigkeit".

more respect throughout both books. The significant passages are as follows:

Vita 3:2 And Eve said to Adam: 'Wilt thou slay me? that I may die, and perchance God the Lord will bring thee into paradise, for on my account hast thou been driven thence.'

Vita 44:2 And Adam said to Eve: 'What hast thou done? A great plague hast thou brought upon us, transgression and sin for all our generations.'

Apoc. Mos. 10:2 Eve wept and said: 'Woe is me; if I come to the day of the Resurrection, all those who have sinned will curse me saying: Eve hath not kept the commandment of God.'

Apoc. Mos. 32:2 And Eve rose up...and began to say...: 'I have sinned before Thee and all sin hath begun through my doing in the creation.'

The role of the devil complicates the picture in the Books of Adam and Eve, but it is evident that the primal sin was at least partially responsible as the causal factor of the sinfulness which followed. As pointed out earlier, both these books also attribute a considerable number of human and cosmic ills directly to Eve's sin. Yet beside this must be placed the strange question of Seth as Adam lay on his death bed: "What is pain?" (Vita 31:3). Further clouding the issue is the positive role played by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, i.e., communicating the secrets of the end time (Vita 29:2). There are obviously a number of traditions in tension in these sources, and harmonization of all the diverse elements would be impossible. Nevertheless, of the sources of late Judaism, Vita and Apoc. Mos. present some of the most forthright statements of the far-reaching moral consequences of a primal sin.

ii. Pseudo-Philo, Testament of Abraham, Apocalypse of Abraham. Other late Jewish sources by no means reveal a homogeneous Adamic fall tradition. Pseudo-Philo (13:8) comments briefly on the Fall story, but goes no further than to attribute death to the sin of Adam. The Testament of Abraham (ch.11)

is at the other end of the spectrum of Adam speculation, for instead of building on Adam's fall, it presents Adam as an exceedingly glorious creature, sitting on a throne at the gates of heaven. There is no hint of his primal sin. The Apocalypse of Abraham, however, does comment directly on the fall of Adam and Eve. In chaps. 22-24, there is a narrative based on the fall of Gen. 3. Adam is portrayed as a noble individual, "very great in height and fearful in breadth, incomparable in aspect" (ch. 23). His sin is mentioned, but there is no generalization about Adam's sin being the cause of later sinfulness. Throughout, Azazel is much more prominent than Adam as the one responsible for sin.

iii. IV Ezra, II Baruch. Since the views of IV Ezra and II Baruch will be discussed in detail below, it will be sufficient to note here that II Baruch firmly opposes the view that Adam is responsible for the sin of his posterity: each man is "the Adam of his own soul" (54:19). At first glance, this appears to run directly counter to the statement in IV Ezra 7:118: "O Adam, what have you done? Though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants." There are other factors, however, which temper the view that IV Ezra should be taken as a whole-hearted supporter of an Adamic fall theory, with II Baruch as the spokesman for individual responsibility (cf. II Baruch 48:42-43!). But this will be dealt with later.

iv. Rabbinic Sources. The later rabbinic writings reflect an increasing emphasis on the disastrous effect of Adam's sin, but this very well may be the result of the subtle influence of the Christian doctrine of

Original Sin.⁸⁴ Most of the rabbinic material is of the nature of haggada, and deals primarily with the physical evils resulting from Adam's sin. Regarding the moral implications of sin, the rabbis preferred the concept of the evil yetzer rather than the Adamic fall theory. Weber was of the opinion that the fall gave the evil yetzer permanent ascendancy, but Tennant disagrees with the assessment, pointing out that the contexts cited by Weber simply state that the evil yetzer is strong, not necessarily invincible, because of Adam's sin.⁸⁵ The words of Schechter summarize the general tendency of rabbinic thought relative to the Adamic fall theory:

There can be little doubt that the belief in the disastrous effects of the sin of Adam on posterity was not entirely absent in Judaism, though this belief did not hold such a prominent place in the Synagogue as in the Christian Church. It is also thought that in the overwhelming majority of mankind there is enough sin in each individual case to bring about death without the sin of Adam.⁸⁶

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this brief survey of the Adamic fall theory, at least for purposes of this present study, is the way that the concept of individual responsibility is maintained even in those sources where the Adamic fall is presented most prominently. By the time of IV Ezra, an Adamic fall tradition could very well have been a threat to the teaching that each man must determine his own destiny, but the sources from virtually every line of tradition show that the concept of individual responsibility was very

84. So Tennant, op. cit. p. 164.

85. See Tennant, ibid., pp. 172-176; references in Tennant are to Weber's first ed., p. 213, 216, 224. In Weber, op. cit. (2nd ed.), the relevant material is on pp. 221-232.

86. Schechter, op. cit., p. 188.



much alive at the end of the first century A. D.

3. Responsibility Placed on a Supernatural Evil Personality (Satan)

a. Old Testament

i. The Demonic in the Old Testament. Israel's first attempts to make an evil personality, external to man, responsible for human evil, begin to appear in the later writings of the OT. Yet throughout the OT, there is evidence of the struggle that took place within Israel to resolve the problem of the presence of evil in the domain of Yahweh. In the cultures surrounding Israel, the responsibility for evil could be shared out among various members of the pantheon, but in Israel, there was one God who must be responsible for everything--good as well as evil. The most explicit statements to that effect are in Is. 45:6-7; Amos 3:6; and Lam. 3:38:

Is. 45:6-7 I am the Lord, and there is no other.
I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe,
I am the Lord who do all these things.

Amos 3:6 Does evil befall a city, unless the Lord has done it?

Lam. 3:38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and evil come?

The inclination to preserve the unity of Yahweh made it necessary to portray him as ultimately responsible for all evil. The more striking demonstrations of this principle are those instances when God is portrayed as provoking some aberrant behavior on the part of man. Thus David was moved to number Israel (II Sam. 24:1), Saul was driven to attempt to take David's life (I Sam. 18:10), and the prophets were induced to prophesy falsely before Ahab (II Chron. 18:18-22). All these and more are attributed directly to God's activity.

The attempts to camouflage any appearance of a superhuman evil personality external to man and opposed to God, are also evident in the early narratives in Genesis. The serpent, which was later to be identified as Satan himself, is presented in Genesis 3 as only a serpent, and simply as one of God's creatures. His sinister nature is quite evident as the plot unfolds, but he remains subject to God, and liable to God's curse. Likewise, in Gen. 6:1-4 there are hints of the demonic in the sons of God who went astray. Again, these hints were to be developed at a later stage, but in the Genesis form of the tradition, the reference to the satanic character of these "divine" beings remains obscure.⁸⁷

Interestingly enough, as Volz has pointed out, one cannot really point to a distinct line of development in the OT whereby Yahweh is gradually emancipated from the demonic. The concept remains firmly embedded right through the writings of the major prophets.⁸⁸ It is true that the more vigorous aspects of the demonic in Yahweh are somewhat attenuated in the prophets; for example, Elijah actually killed the prophets of Baal with the sword, but Jeremiah simply cursed Hananiah.⁸⁹ There is also evidence that the manifestations of Yahweh are more dominated by moral concerns in the prophetic writings, so that the appearances of Yahweh which produce just a reaction of terror (e.g., Ex. 4:24), fade into the background. In the prophets, Yahweh's manifestations are more clearly connected with judgment and discipline. The experience of Elijah at

87. For an analysis of how older accounts were "demythologized" in Israel, see Brevard Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (SBT 27), 2nd ed., London, 1962, pp. 43-50 (Gen. 3:1-5), 50-59 (Gen. 6:1-4). Milik, however, thinks that Gen. 6:1-4 is actually borrowing from the Enoch tradition ("Problèmes" [1971], p. 349).

88. Paul Volz, *Das Dämonische in Jahwe*, Tübingen, 1924, p. 5.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Mt. Horeb may also be an example of a reaction against the terrifying demonic element which made the Sinai experience the theophany par excellence: the "demonic" Elijah does not find God in the typical awe-inducing elements of the wind, earthquake, and fire, but rather in the still, small voice.⁹⁰ It may be because of a desire to soften the impact of the Sinai theophany that the classical prophets nowhere use the word Horeb or Sinai.⁹¹

ii. Satan in the Old Testament. The gradual introduction of a demonic personality to assume responsibility for evil coincides with Israel's post-exilic situation. It became increasingly difficult to accept disaster as God's judgment on sin and as his disciplinary intervention into national and personal life. In the words of Gaster: "Men who are visited with affliction will not readily reconcile themselves to the darkness unless confident of the dawn, nor be persuaded of God's justice unless convinced at the same time of his mercy."⁹² As a result, then, of Israel's deplorable situation, there was an inclination to adopt elements of the dualistic solution to the problem of evil and to place responsibility for evil on a supernatural adversary of Yahweh. There are passages in the OT which provide the seed for this development. Foremost among them are those passages which speak of the court of Yahweh or of his heavenly hosts. This is the concept that is evident in the prologue to Job, in Ps. 82, and in Micaiah's parable to Ahab (II Chron. 18:18-22). In each case, the link with Yahweh's will is established somewhat

90. Ibid., p. 35.

91. Ibid., p. 36. Except Mal. 3:22 (EVV 4:4), which Volz considers to be a later addition to the text.

92. T. H. Gaster, "Satan," IDB IV, p. 225.

differently: in Job, the adversary acts with Yahweh's reluctant permission; in Ps. 82, the members of Yahweh's court have misbehaved rather badly and are punished accordingly; in II Chron. 18, the evil spirit seems to be acting fully under God's direction. When evil is done, then, it can be said that Yahweh may command it, or permit it, as well as punish it in the end. Thus his sovereignty is preserved. Specific attention should be paid in this regard, to those contexts in the OT where $\gamma\alpha\delta$ refers specifically to a supernatural, malevolent personality which has a hand in man's misfortunes: Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Zech. 3:1-2; I Chron. 21:1. In the Hebrew text, the article is used in Job and Zech. ($\gamma\alpha\delta\pi$); In I Chron., the article is missing.⁹³ None of these instances should actually be translated as a proper noun since the term "accuser" simply describes the role which the supernatural being plays. In I Chron., the flavor is best preserved in English by translating the anarthrous noun as "a satan". But this last passage is particularly significant because it demonstrates the reworking of the earlier account of the same incident in II Sam. 24:1. The Chronicler ascribes the impulse to number Israel to "a satan" rather than to Yahweh himself, thus mitigating Yahweh's direct involvement in David's culpable deed.

b. Palestinian Jewish Sources

i. Ecclesiasticus. The late OT hints of a dualistic solution to the problem of evil were destined neither for an immediate nor total triumph, at least not within Judaism proper. There is evidence of a struggle to maintain

93. The LXX renders the term in all the passages cited as $\delta\ \delta\iota\alpha\beta\omicron\lambda\omicron\varsigma$, the Vulgate treats the term as a proper noun. Elsewhere, the LXX normally renders the term as $\delta\iota\alpha\beta\omicron\lambda\omicron\varsigma$, and the Vulgate uses diabolus when the term is not referring to a supernatural being (ibid., p. 224).

a more purely monotheistic solution to the problem. This reaction is evident in Ecclus. 21:27: "When an ungodly man curses his adversary, he curses his own soul." This passage properly belongs to a discussion of the evil yetzer, but it definitely represents some sort of polemic against the tendency to posit an external tempter who might diminish man's personal responsibility. According to Gaster, this is the only occurrence of $\sigma\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\hat{\alpha}\varsigma$ in the Apocrypha.⁹⁴

While Ecclus. studiously avoids any hint of a satanic personality, several early Palestinian sources show no such hesitancy. Even in those sources where speculation about the origin of human evil is not prominent, demonic spirits can nevertheless play a prominent role. The leader of these evil spirits is Satan, Belial (Worthless One), or Mastema (Hostility),⁹⁵ the latter two terms being used even more frequently than Satan. This evil personality is usually seen to have his initial contact with humanity and human evil in one of two settings: 1. The paradise story (Gen. 3), where the serpent becomes Satan; 2. The activity of the Watchers (cf. Gen. 6:1-4), which may be either cohabiting with human beings, or simply instructing humans in the ways of forbidden knowledge.

ii. Jubilees. One of the sources which is permeated with evil spirits led by Satan (Mastema), is Jubilees. As far as the origin of evil is concerned, Jubilees actually has very little to say. It recounts the paradise story and simply refers to the serpent, with no advance beyond the Genesis account. But the Jubilees version of the Watcher story varies from

94. Ibid., but the alternative form $\delta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\beta\omicron\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ occurs in Wisdom 2:24.

95. According to Gaster, a term related philologically to Satan (ibid., p. 225).

that of the I Enoch account. On the one hand, it recognizes the sin of the Watchers in cohabiting with humans (4:22; 5:1-7), thereby precipitating the flood (5:1-7; 7:21); but on the other hand, the sin of the Watchers is excluded as the direct cause of post-diluvian evil. This is clear from 5:12: "And he made for all his works a new and righteous nature, so that they should not sin in their whole nature for ever, but should be all righteous each in his kind alway." Thus evil had to begin anew after the flood. The Jubilees account of the Watchers also varies somewhat from the Enoch tradition by viewing the knowledge imparted by them to man in a positive light (4:15ff; cf. 10:10ff). After the flood, however, evil demons, sons of the original Watchers who sinned (10:5), arose again and were leading man astray. Noah interceded on behalf of humanity (10:3), and God agreed to bind all the spirits (10:7), but when Satan pleaded, he was finally granted one tenth of the evil spirits, with the remainder being bound in the place of condemnation (10:9-12). The other numerous references in Jubilees to Satan and his evil angels may perhaps be best summarized under four headings:

1. The evil spirits are responsible both for: a. physical woes, and b. moral evil. a. Mastema sent the ravens to plague Abraham and his family (11:11ff); b. Mastema and his spirits brought about all manner of evil and transgression in Ur (11:4ff).
2. The evil spirits are ultimately subject to God and may also be controlled by man: Noah was entrusted with the herbal secrets which could overpower the spirits (10:12); Abraham was particularly successful over the spirits: he prayed to be delivered from them (12:20), he promised Rebekkah and Jacob that the spirits of Mastema would not rule over Jacob's seed (19:28), and he thanked God that the adversary had not overcome him (22:8); Joseph was also successful in fending off the spirits, for Egypt was free from Satan while Joseph reigned (40:9; 46:2); finally, during the time of restoration there would be no Satan in the land (23:29; 50:5).
3. Hints of the spirit world in the OT are made more explicit: Deut. 32:8-9 (LXX) is expanded in Jub. 15:31: "And over all hath He placed spirits in authority to lead them astray from Him, (32) but

over Israel He did not appoint any angel or spirit, for He alone is their leader" (cf. also Dan. 10:13, 20-21).

4. Demonic activities ascribed to God in the OT are attributed to Satan (or Mastema): the sacrifice of Isaac was incited by Mastema (17:16); Moses was hindered by Mastema on the way to Egypt (48:2); Mastema incited the Egyptians against Israel (48:9-15); the powers of Mastema killed the firstborn (49:2).

Thus, while Jubilees is saturated with demonic powers which are responsible in some way for evil (No. 1, above), it is clear that man is still responsible and can be victorious over the demons (No. 2). Jubilees is also a clear witness to the tension within Judaism as it seeks to come to some modus vivendi with the problem of evil. On the one hand, Jubilees can still present God as directly responsible for evil, albeit through evil powers (No. 3), while, on the other hand, there is an evident reaction against the OT manner of ascribing "demonic" activity directly to God (No. 4).

iii. I Enoch. In I Enoch, the fall of the Watchers is used almost exclusively as an explanation of human wickedness. Because of the rather full usage made of the Watcher tale in Enoch and elsewhere, Williams suggests that the Watcher account was the earlier attempt to account for human wickedness, and it was only gradually displaced by the Paradise story of Gen. 3.⁹⁶ The Watcher tale is, of course, an alternative theory for the origin of human sinfulness, and it is more widespread in the early apocalyptic sources (i.e., Jub., I En., T. Reub., CDC, and it is also present in the later sources of II En. and II Bar.), but the evidence does not really permit a firm conclusion as to which theory developed first. But in any case, the fall of the Watchers has well-nigh eclipsed the Adamic fall in the Enoch literature. In the

96. Williams, op. cit., pp. 20ff.

present book of I Enoch both aspects of the sin of the Watchers are present:

- a. cohabiting with earthly women (6-16, passim; 69:5-6; 86:1ff; 106:13ff);
- b. giving forbidden knowledge to humans (8:1; 10:6ff; 64:1-2; 69:4ff).

The first aspect is the more prominent in the apocalyptic tradition, and significantly, it occurs in four of the seven main sections of I Enoch.⁹⁷

Aside from these attempts to use the Watchers as an explanation of the origin of human wickedness, I Enoch presents the Watchers or Satans as playing an important role in human and cosmic affairs. The Satans as a group have at least three functions in I Enoch, and these are made most explicit in the Similitudes: to tempt man to sin (69:4-6), to accuse those who have fallen (40:7), and to serve as carriers of divine punishment (53:3).⁹⁸ In addition, Azazel is singled out as the leader of the Satans who introduced forbidden knowledge to man (8:1; 10:4, 8; 54:5-6). He is to be bound in darkness so he can no longer lead men astray (10:4), and then at the end of time he is to be judged (10:12; 55:4). It is specifically stated that all sin is to be ascribed to Azazel (10:8). Thus I Enoch portrays evil personalities, and

97. Sections 2, 3, 5, 7, in the outline given by Eissfeldt, Intro., p. 618. If Milik's idea of an original Enoch "Pentateuch" is accepted, then the "Fall" of the Watchers would be a part of the Book of the Watchers (1-36), the Book of Dreams (83-90), and the Epistle of Enoch (91-107), though it should be noted that Milik thinks that 106-107 did not come from the same author who wrote 91-105 (Milik, 1971, p. 365). Milik's comments (ibid., p. 366ff), also suggest that the Book of the Giants, Aramaic fragments of which have been recovered at Qumran, likewise deals with the "Fall" of the Watchers. If Milik is correct in suggesting that the Book of Giants was originally part of the Enoch corpus, only to be displaced later by the Similitudes (ibid., p. 334), then the Watcher tale would have been part of four of the five original "books" of the Enoch "Pentateuch", being absent only from the Book of Astronomy (72-82).

98. These are the same functions that Charles sees the NT Satan performing (APOT II, p. 185).

Azazel in particular, as responsible for sin, yet as fulfilling a certain function in the economy of the world. But for all the importance that is conferred upon these demonic forces, in at least one section of I Enoch, it is emphatically claimed that each man is responsible for his own sin (98:4-5). Charles is undoubtedly correct in pointing out the wide variety of teachings present in the many and varied sources that make up the present book of I En.: "Nearly every religious idea appears in a variety of forms."⁹⁹ But the predominance of a particular type of demonology, i.e., the fall of the Watchers, the lack of Adamic fall speculation, and yet the emphatic affirmation of human responsibility marks I Enoch with a certain unity as far as the problem of evil is concerned.

iv. Dead Sea Scrolls. In the DSS, both the Satan tradition and the evil yetzer tradition seem to be employed as a means of explaining the problem of evil. The Satan tradition is more prominent, however, because of the role played by Belial in the cosmic dualism of the scrolls. From the first, the rigorous determinism of the scrolls has dominated the discussion of the theology of Qumran. In the words of Mansoor in his summary of the teachings of IQH: "God has predestined every man from birth, for evil or for good, for destruction or salvation. He has determined the fate of His creatures before creation."¹⁰⁰ Belial and his spirit legions are prominent throughout the major scrolls of the community. Belial himself is mentioned 33 times in all:

99. Ibid., p. 163.

100. Menahem Mansoor, The Thanksgiving Hymns, Leiden, 1961, p. 53.

12 in IQM, 5 in IQS, 10 in IQH, and 6 in CDC.¹⁰¹ Yet God remains firmly in control: "For it is He who created the spirits of Light and Darkness and founded every action upon them...." (IQS 3:25). Even when describing the chief functions of Belial, the scrolls maintain the divine initiative: "But Satan, the Angel of Malevolence, Thou hast created for the Pit; his rule is in Darkness and his purpose is to bring about wickedness and iniquity" (IQM 13:11). So great has been the interest in the cosmic dualism of the scrolls that the evil yetzer tradition has been quite overshadowed. The elements of the evil yetzer tradition will be discussed in their place, but here it should be sufficient to state that by far the majority of scholars recognize the overriding importance of the cosmic dualism in the major sectarian scrolls of the community (IQM, IQH, IQS, CDC). A point of contention, however, has been the treatise on the Two Spirits in IQS. Wernberg-Møller has produced a vigorous defense for the psychological interpretation of this section.¹⁰² While he has overstated his case, he

101. Statistics are cited from Yigael Yadin, The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness, trans. by Batya and Chaim Rabin, Oxford, 1962, p. 232.

102. P. Wernberg-Møller, "A Reconsideration of the Two Spirits in the Rule of the Community (I Q Serek III, 13-IV, 26)," RQ 3 (1961-62), pp. 413-441. This represents a reversal of Wernberg-Møller's position worked out in his standard commentary, The Manual of Discipline: Translated and Annotated with an Introduction, Leiden, 1957. H. G. May quite rightly takes Wernberg-Møller to task for finding "no evidence of cosmic dualism or determinism" in the section on the Two Spirits ("Cosmological Reference in the Qumran Doctrine of the Two Spirits and in Old Testament Imagery," JBL 82 [1963], p. 1). May (*ibid.*) cites an impressive list of scholars who maintain that there is a cosmic dualism in IQS 3:13ff: Albright, Burrows, Betz, Cross, Mansoor, Dupont-Sommer, Kuhn, Licht, and Yadin. Peter von der Osten-Sacken has also registered disagreement with Wernberg-Møller (Gott und Belial. Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Dualismus in den Texten aus Qumran, Göttingen, 1969, pp. 141-142). See also the bibliography appended to the article by John Pryke ("Spirit' and 'Flesh' in the Qumran Documents and some New Testament Texts," RQ 5 [1965], pp. 345-360; biblio. on pp. 358-360).

has demonstrated that the lines between the "sons of light" and the "sons of darkness" are not altogether clear-cut. Not only does the Angel of Darkness rule over his own, he also has an influence over the children of righteousness:

IQS 3:21-24 And the Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray, and until his end, all their sin, iniquities, wickedness, and all their unlawful deeds are caused by his dominion in accordance with the mysteries of God. Every one of their chastisements, and every one of the seasons of their distress shall be brought about by the rule of his persecution; for all his allotted spirits seek the overthrow of the sons of light.

This would appear to allow for some element of interchange between the two groups, at least the "sons of light" appear capable of falling from their privileged position. This aspect, along with the exhortations and threatened punishments, seem to point to some vestige of the idea that a man is responsible for determining his own destiny, and this in spite of the deterministic outlook of the community.

While it would appear that Qumran would attribute human evil to an external malevolent personality, acting, of course, under God's ultimate control, there is remarkably little speculation about the actual origin of evil. CDC 2:17-18 makes a passing remark about the sin of the Watchers, but it is simply mentioned as an example of disobedience. It is doubtful whether it ever occurred to the community that it should attempt to synthesize its various traditions about evil into a unified theory, so there is bound to be some tension between the various elements employed at Qumran. Although the evil yetzer theory will be dealt with below, it might be helpful to note here, Otzen's attempt at an explanation of the two major traditions at Qumran: that which happens in the cosmos, is

reflected in the individual man.¹⁰³ This may not really be so much explanation as it is description, but it does help to correlate the Satan tradition with the evil yetzer tradition--not only is there the cosmological dualism in the universe, there is a psychological dualism which is worked out in the heart of man.

v. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Another source which is permeated with a vast demonology is the Testaments. Beliar is the head of the evil spirits, and either he or his cohorts are mentioned in every one of the twelve testaments. T. Zeb. has only one reference (9:7 [β] ; or 9:8 [bdg]),¹⁰⁴ while T. Dan has the most references.¹⁰⁵ There are also two references to the sin of the Watchers: in T. Reub. 5:5-7 it is the women who enticed the Watchers, thus placing the responsibility upon humanity, rather than vice versa; in T. Naph. 3:5 there is simply a passing comment about the sin of the Watchers. Actually, it would appear that the Testaments are not really interested in the origin of human wickedness; they are much more concerned about the daily struggle in pursuit of righteousness. In fact, of the three activities which the demons apparently pursue in I Enoch,¹⁰⁶ only the activity of tempting is prominent in the Testaments.¹⁰⁷ A summary of

103. Benedikt Otzen, "Die neugefundenen hebräischen Sektenschriften und die Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen," Studia Theologica 7 (1953), p. 135.

104. The sigla are those used by Charles in The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Oxford, 1908. See Charles' index for a listing of the occurrences of "spirit" and "Beliar" in the Testaments.

105. Charles, APOT II, p. 334, note on T.D. 5:6, states that this is the earliest citation to link Dan with the Antichrist.

106. See Charles, APOT II, p. 185.

107. Charles, APOT II, p. 297. They do not appear at all as accusers, and only twice as tormenters (T.L. 3:2; T.A. 6:5).

the demonology of the Testaments is given by Charles,¹⁰⁸ but the relevant aspects may be noted here as follows:

1. It is the responsibility of the evil spirits to incite the various faults in man (T. R. 2:1-8; T. Jud. 16:1; T. Dan. 2:4; T. B. 3:3).
2. Beliar (Satan) is chief evil spirit, and has some control over the other spirits (T. Levi 3:3; T. S. 2:7; cf. T. N. 8:4).
3. The righteous can attain victory over Beliar and banish him and his spirits (T. S. 6:6; T. I. 4:4; 7:7; T. N. 8:4; T. B. 3:3).
4. The spirits remain fully under God's control:
 - a. They function only with God's permission (T. B. 3:3).
 - b. They will be punished on the day of judgment (T. L. 3:3).

Thus, just as in Jubilees and I Enoch where demonology is also rampant, man is still responsible for determining his own destiny, and God is still in control of the world, including its demons. These two aspects, linked with the fact that the demons in the Testaments operate within man, suggest that the evil yetzer tradition might provide a more adequate explanation of the attempts to deal with the problem of evil in the Testaments, than does the more obvious Satan tradition. When certain traits of the Testaments and the DSS are compared, this possibility becomes even more attractive.¹⁰⁹ To be sure, the spirits in the Testaments are much more personalized than one would expect of the evil inclination of the later rabbinic teaching, yet even the Rabbis could personalize the yetzer as Satan.¹¹⁰

108. Ibid., pp. 296-297, note on T.R. 2:1.

109. See discussion of evil yetzer in section C, 4, below. Otzen (op. cit., pp. 135-137) sees the main difference between IQS dualism and the dualism of the Testaments in the fact that in IQS there is both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic dualism, but in the Testaments there is only the microcosmic aspect.

110. See note 49, supra.

vi. Martyrdom of Isaiah, Assumption of Moses, Apocalypse of Abraham, Testament of Abraham, Books of Adam and Eve. There are several other works of probable Palestinian provenance which also adopt an evil personality contra God as a means of solving the problem of evil. The Martyrdom of Isaiah speaks of Sammael and Beliar as satans who control Manasseh. Beliar is said to dwell in Manasseh (1:9; 3:11), and the same is true of Sammael (2:1). The Assumption of Moses contains one brief reference to Satan, but that is merely to his absence in the time of restoration (10:1, cf. Jub. 23:29; 50:5). The Apocalypse of Abraham presents Azazel as a fallen angel who is the source of all wickedness (ch. 13), and who is in a strange way identified with hell (ch. 31).¹¹¹ The Testament of Abraham presents a rather monstrous angel of death who appears to have nothing to do with moral evil, being simply the personification of physical evil (ch. 17, long rescension).¹¹² In the Books of Adam and Eve, the devil appears frequently. He seems to always be external to man, though there is a reference to the "war which the adversary put in thee (Adam)" (Apoc. Mos. 28:4). Only once is there a reference to a

111. B. J. Bamberger, "Abraham, Apocalypse of," IDB I, p. 21, considers the Azazel in Apoc. Abr. to represent a much more radical dualism than is found in the Azazel tradition of I En: "He is a radically evil being, whose existence is not accounted for, but whose reality is vividly felt--like Belial in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs." But the Belial of the Testaments appears to be much more susceptible to control by man, than does the Azazel of I En. Which of the "satanic" figures represents the most radical dualism is problematical, but Bamberger is probably right in describing the Apoc. Abr. as quasi-gnostic, for post-A.D. 70 rabbinic Judaism was reverting to a more purely monotheistic approach which tended to minimize the role of Satan (e.g. II Bar., 4 Ezra, Ps.-Philo).

112. Box, op. cit., p. xx, has taken the angel of death as one of the indications of a Hellenistic (Egyptian) origin of Test. Abr., but Bamberger has suggested ("Abraham, Testament of," IDB I, p. 21), that the sections on the angel of death and perhaps other Hellenistic elements were interpolated, resulting in the longer rescension. Cf. note 1, supra.

multiplicity of devils (Vita 15:1).¹¹³ The devil uses at least three different guises: he appears as an angel (Vita 9:1); he uses Eve as his mouthpiece (Apoc. Mos. 21:3); and he uses the serpent as his spokesman (Apoc. Mos. 16:1ff). In Vita 12-17 there is a more complete account of the devil's envy (cf. Wisdom 2:24): the devil fell because he refused to worship Adam. In spite of this elaborate demonic framework, it is obvious that man is still expected to obey and is considered quite capable of determining his own destiny (Apoc. Mos. 28:4).

c. Hellenistic Jewish Sources

i. Wisdom of Solomon (and Philo). Those Hellenistic Jewish sources which adopted a metaphysical dualism had less need to attribute evil to an evil personality because there was a readily available explanation for evil in the concept of the inherent evilness of matter. Philo provides a good example of a Hellenistic approach to Judaism which refuses to introduce a personal tempter. In the Wisdom of Solomon 2:24 however, there occurs a brief reference to the role of the devil: "Through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it." This is the only direct reference to the devil in Wisdom, so demonology could hardly be said to play a large part in its total scheme. Yet it is sufficient to introduce a three-pole tension in Wisdom: monotheism, metaphysical dualism, and ethical dualism. In Philo, on the other hand, there is only the tension between monotheism and metaphysical dualism. But in

113. Wells, APOT II, p. 137.

neither case is there any question of displacing the one God from having full control over his creation; the elements of dualism remain subservient to the belief in the one God.

ii. Sibylline Oracles. Satan also plays a small role in the Sibylline Oracles. In Book III, lines 63-73, Beliar is mentioned, but there has been much discussion both as to whether this is a Jewish or Christian pericope, and also about the possible historical inferences.¹¹⁴ The supernatural nature of Beliar is not immediately self-evident here,¹¹⁵ but the fact that in line 68 he is said to deceive "mortals" (*μάρτυρας*) implies that he is a notch above them. In any case, this Beliar is thoroughly under God's control and will be destroyed by fire (line 73).

iii. II Enoch. A more thorough-going synthesis of Hellenistic and "satanic" tendencies is found in II Enoch.¹¹⁶ Of primary concern here is the role of the evil angels or satans which appear in the book. There are at least three different traditions woven together, with each probably taking its point of departure from OT references. First of all, there are elements of the tradition which touch on the serpent's role in Gen. 3 (II En. 31:1-6); secondly, there are elements which build on Gen. 6:1-4, i.e., the fall of the Watchers (II En. 18:3-8); thirdly, there are strands of a tradition

114. See H. C. O. Lanchester in APOT II, pp. 371, 380, for comment and suggested historical applications.

115. T. H. Gaster, "Belial," IDB I, p. 377, states, that, in the pseudepigraphic literature, Beliar (a miswritten form of Belial) is "uniformly regarded" as the proper name of the Prince of Evil. But this instance in the Sib. Or. may be a case of a reversion to the OT usage where Belial can refer to a human or demonic malevolent power.

116. Charles, APOT II, p. 426, notes the elements which point to an Egyptian provenance. Cf. also Porter, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-156, who sees much less Hellenistic influence, and very little indeed in connection with the various aspects of sin.

which link the Satanic fall to pride, rather than to lust. Very likely this aspect takes its point of departure from Is. 14:12-15 and Ez. 28:11-19 (II En. 29:4; cf. 7:1-5; 18:1-9; 31:1-6). The last two traditions are frequently interwoven so that distinctions are difficult to make. It would also appear that there are three levels of punishment for satanic beings: those who lusted after women are under the earth (18:7); other watchers are in the second heaven (7:1-5; 18:4); and still other beings are in the fifth heaven (18:1-9). In addition, it is said that one of the angels was cast out into the air (29:4; cf. 31:4). Though much of the II Enoch speculation bears little relationship with evil in man it is clear that Satan has a hand in human sin (31:1-6), but it is also clear that man is fully responsible for his own fate (30:15).

iv. The Testament of Job. Another source of probable Hellenistic provenance which employs the Satan tradition is the Testament of Job.¹¹⁷

117. The Testament of Job has been variously dated from the first century B.C. to the second century A.D.; see Denis, op. cit., p. 103. The gnostic and mystic elements noted by K. Kohler ("Testament of Job," Semitic Studies in Memory of Rev. Dr. Alexander Kohut, ed. G. A. Kohut, Berlin, 1897, p. 272), perhaps favor a later dating, but Kohler himself states that the Testament originated in "pre-Christian circles of Hellenistic Jews belonging to the Essene brotherhood" (ibid., p. 287). Denis notes that the original language was Greek (op. cit., p. 103), a view contradicted, however, by C. C. Torrey (The Apocryphal Literature: A Brief Introduction, New Haven, 1945, p. 143), who prefers an Aramaic original. For full discussion of introductory matters, see Denis, op. cit., pp. 100-104. The relationship of the Testament of Job to rabbinic material is discussed in the excellent introduction which Kohler includes (op. cit., pp. 264-295) with his text and translation. The chapter and verse divisions cited in the text are those used by Paul Riessler in Altjüdisches Schrifttum ausserhalb der Bibel, Heidelberg, 1966 (reprint of 1928 edition), pp. 1104-1134. In connection with his critical edition of the Greek text, S. P. Brock (Testamentum Iobi, Leiden, 1967, p. 17) gives a helpful table correlating the chapter enumerations used by M. R. James (Anecdota Apocrypha II = Texts and Studies V. I, Cambridge, 1897, pp. 104-137) with the chapter and verse enumerations used by Kohler (op. cit.). Riessler and Brock follow James' system.

In elaborating on the biblical story of Job, the Testament of Job makes considerable use of the figure of Satan. Most notably, Job is warned of the coming attack (4:4-5) and is assured of ultimate triumph over Satan (4:6ff). Satan's initial disguise and his attacks on Job are described in some detail (6:4-8:3; 16:1-26:6), and Satan's admission of defeat in his battle against Job is also colorfully depicted (27:1-6). Somewhat later in the narrative, Elihu is also said to be inspired by Satan (41:5). But from the standpoint of theodicy, it is significant that Job still attributes his "fate" directly to God. Just as in the biblical story of Job: "The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (19:4).

d. The Absence of Satan in Later Palestinian Jewish

Sources: IV Ezra, II Baruch, Pseudo-Philo

This discussion would not be complete without at least a brief reference to those later Palestinian sources which seem to virtually ignore the whole demonic complex. Of significance in this respect are IV Ezra, II Baruch, and Pseudo-Philo. In IV Ezra there is no reference to a satan of any sort, though the angelic being Uriel is quite prominent. II Baruch 56:11-16 mentions the sin of the Watchers, but reverses the responsibility onto man: "For he became a danger to his own soul; even to the angels became he a danger" (II Bar. 56:10). Furthermore, II Baruch does not link the sin of the Watchers to continuing human evil. In Pseudo-Philo 45:6 there is an abrupt reference to "the adversary", which James sees as the equivalent of Mastema in Jubilees, but as James points out, elsewhere Pseudo-Philo seems

to be consciously avoiding the ground traversed by Jubilees.¹¹⁸ The implications of this "absence of Satan" will be developed more fully in connection with IV Ezra, but this much is clear: there were some within Judaism who saw no need to resort to a dualism of any sort as an answer to the problem of evil, but were determined to seek a solution that was compatible with a strict monotheism.¹¹⁹

4. Responsibility Placed on God: the Evil Yetzer

a. The Rabbinic Teaching

Although there is evidence for a certain amount of Adam and Satan speculation in the rabbinic schools, the concept which finally triumphed as the most adequate explanation of moral evil in man is the theory of the evil yetzer. The evil yetzer teaching is not found in the OT, but is a product of rabbinic exegetical methods which found convenient points of departure in the Torah. In the discussion that follows, the prominent characteristics of the later doctrine are noted first; the development of these elements is then traced in the pre-rabbinic sources. There are numerous studies available which give a rather thorough treatment to the rabbinic concept of the evil yetzer,¹²⁰ so a brief survey of the primary features should suffice here.

118. M. R. James, The Biblical Antiquities of Philo, London, 1917, p. 46. James seems to imply that Ps.-Philo avoids duplicating the narrative material of Jubilees. If, however, Ps.-Philo was relating his work in some way to Jub., either positively or negatively, the absence of demons in Ps.-Philo could very well be intentional, for Jub. is permeated with demons.

119. For a survey of the various attempts throughout the history of Judaism to rationalize the demonic within a monotheistic structure, see Harry S. May, "The Daimonic in Jewish History; (or, the Garden of Eden Revisited)," ZRelGg 23 (1971), pp. 205-19.

120. A thorough, and readily-available summary is in Schechter, op. cit., pp. 242-292. Also, Moore I, 479-496; Weber, op. cit., pp. 209-259 (sections

By way of general description, the following points may be noted:

1. God is responsible for creating the evil yetzer in every man.¹²¹
2. The evil yetzer is located in the heart,¹²² though it may also be described as being the heart itself.¹²³ Yet, on occasion, the evil yetzer may even be described as external to man, and personalized as Satan.¹²⁴
3. The evil yetzer is said to arise early in life.¹²⁵
4. Although it is the function of the evil yetzer to tempt and lead astray,¹²⁶ it is also intended to serve a useful function in life, and may even be described as essential.¹²⁷

With reference to obtaining victory over the evil yetzer, the following aspects may be noted:

46-54); Porter, op. cit., pp. 108-135; also Porter's criticism of Weber in Porter, op. cit., pp. 98-107; Charles Taylor, Sayings of the Jewish Fathers, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1897, pp. 37, 63f., 70, 77, 82, 98, 140, 147-152, and cf. 128-130, 186-192; H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, IV.1, München, 1956, pp. 466-483; Williams, op. cit., pp. 60-70. Porter, op. cit., p. 109, notes that the following contexts contain considerable material on the evil yetzer: Ber. 60-61; Sukk. 51b-52a; Kidd. 30b, 81; B.B. 16a; Yoma 69b-70b; Sanh. 20a; Ber. R. 22, 34.

121. Kidd. 30b; Num. R. 13; the sources also speak of two yetzers, a good one and an evil one: M. Ber. 9:5; Ber. 61a; Ned. 32b. Schechter, op. cit., p. 243, suggests that the good yetzer may have been a later development.

122. Ber. 61a (cf. Schechter, op. cit., pp. 255ff).

123. Sukk. 52a; B.B. 17a (cf. Schechter, op. cit., pp. 258ff).

124. B. B. 16a; Sukk. 52b (cf. Schechter, op. cit., pp. 243-249).

125. This is the consensus noted by Schechter, op. cit., pp. 254ff. The point was much debated among the Rabbis. Some said it arose at conception, others, during the embryonic state, or at birth. At any rate, the evil yetzer was said to enjoy a priority of 13 years over the good yetzer which arose only at puberty. See ibid., pp. 252-255 for discussion and references.

126. Sukk. 52b; B.B. 16a (cf. Schechter, op. cit., pp. 244-252).

127. Ber. R. 9:7; Sanh. 64a (cf. Schechter, op. cit. pp. 266-268). The

1. Man is responsible for controlling his evil yetzer and directing it to positive attainments.¹²⁸ It should be added, however, that on occasion, the rabbis sense the hopelessness of man's condition and admit that only through God's gracious assistance can victory be gained over the yetzer,¹²⁹ but man must first show himself worthy of grace by exercising his freedom to choose.¹³⁰

2. The best weapons against the evil yetzer are the study of the law¹³¹ and the performance of deeds of loving-kindness.¹³²

3. The evil yetzer will be removed permanently in the messianic era,¹³³ though it was removed for a time at Mt. Sinai.¹³⁴

It is a hopeless task to attempt to reconcile all the minor inconsistencies

constructive use of the evil yetzer is summarized by Schechter as follows: "The Evil Yezer...is reduced to certain passions without which neither the propagation of species nor the building up of the proper civilisation would be thinkable" (*ibid.*, p. 267). Thus no one would be able to build a house, marry a wife, beget children or engage in commerce except for the evil yetzer (cf. Ber. R. 9:7). This turning of the evil yetzer into a potential for good is an important factor in the development of the rabbinic theodicy, for God could thereby be relieved of the direct responsibility for evil.

128. Ber. R. 34:10; Eccl. R. 9:1 (cf. Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-273).

129. See *ibid.*, pp. 278-284. Here Schechter notes the prayers for deliverance from the evil yetzer (e.g., Ber. 16b; 17b), and the complaints that God could have prevented certain outbreaks of sin (cf. Ber. R. 22:9).

130. Schechter, *op. cit.*, p. 289. Cf. P.K. 165a (cited by Schechter, *ibid.*, p. 290); Num. R. 15:16.

131. A. Zar. 5b; B.B. 16a; Kidd. 30b; Ber. R. 70:8 (cf. Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 273f).

132. A. Zar. 5b. See Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-278 for further citations and other remedies, such as contemplation of death, and various ascetic activities.

133. Sukk. 52a; cf. also Ber. R. 48:11; 89:1; Ex. R. 41:7; 46:4. See Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-292, for further references.

134. Cant. R. 1:2. The evil yetzer returned when the Israelites asked Moses to serve as a mediator. See Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-292.

in the rabbinic teaching, but the general tendency is quite clear: there is one God who is responsible for both evil and good; God placed the evil yetzer in man, intending it to be used constructively, and giving him the law to be employed to that end. Before these elements are noted in the earlier sources, a brief word is necessary regarding the OT preparation for the doctrine.¹³⁵

The Hebrew noun יֵצֶר can be translated in a sense closely related to its basic verbal meaning, i.e. something made, as an idol (Hab. 2:18), or a clay artifact (Is. 29:16). But its more common meaning is: "nature", "disposition", "quality". This "nature", or "disposition" may be wholesome (Is. 26:3; I Chron. 29:18),¹³⁶ rather neutral (I Chron. 28:9), or distinctly pejorative, as in Gen. 6:5 (every yetzer of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually), and Gen. 8:21 (the yetzer of man's heart is evil from his youth). Deut. 31:21 and Ps. 103:14 are similarly negative in connotation. It was this negative usage which inspired the rabbinical teaching, assisted by some peculiarities in the sacred text: Gen. 2:7 uses an unusual form of the verb, יָצַח, with two yods, in contrast to the normal spelling יָצַח (2:19). In the words of Seitz: "Since it was believed that such apparent irregularities of text in holy writ could not be dismissed as mere accidents without significance, the occurrence of the second yod was taken as evidence

135. Porter, *op. cit.*, pp. 136ff., and Roland Murphy, "Yēser in the Qumran Literature," *Biblica* 39 (1958), pp. 334ff., both touch on the biblical background of the term.

136. According to Murphy, *ibid.*, these are the only two OT occurrences of the term in a sense favorable to man.

that when God formed man it was with two yešārîm.¹³⁷ Thus the hint of an evil yetzer was derived from Gen. 6:5 and 8:21, while the idea that there were opposing yetzers created by God was developed from Gen. 2:7. The exegetical method employed is of course quite late, but the religious implications of the evil yetzer teaching do begin to manifest themselves in the early Palestinian Jewish sources.

b. Palestinian Jewish Sources

i. Ecclesiasticus. With reference to Ecclesiasticus, F. C. Porter states that there is "definite proof of the use of the word yeçer, almost two centuries before Christ, in the rabbinical sense."¹³⁸ That this conclusion is indeed justified is evident from passages which are now extant in Hebrew, and from those passages where an original yetzer is rendered likely by conjectures based upon the Syriac or LXX. In addition, there are statements in Ecclesiasticus, which, while not employing the term yetzer, nevertheless express concepts very much in keeping with the later rabbinic teaching.

First of all, there are two passages in which an original yetzer has been confirmed by the recovery of the Hebrew text: 15:14, and 27:6 = Heb. 6:22⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾. The appearance of yetzer in 15:14 is made more intriguing by an additional line

137. Oscar J. F. Seitz, "Two Spirits in Man: An Essay in Biblical Exegesis," NTS 6 (1959-60), p. 85. Porter notes Siphre and M. Ber. 9:5 on Deut. 6:5 where the same device was used in deriving the idea of a double or divided heart from כּכּ with the double beth (op. cit., pp. 110-111).

138. Porter, op. cit., p. 145.

in the Hebrew which is missing in the LXX, Syriac, and Latin.¹³⁹ Verse 14 occurs in a lengthy discourse (15:11-20) on the importance of man's responsibility to choose his own destiny. It is translated by Taylor as follows:¹⁴⁰

15:14 For (?) God created man from the beginning;
And put him into the hand of him that would spoil him
And gave him into the hand of his inclination [yetzer].

The Hebrew rendering of three lines yields a negative nuance for yetzer by making lines b and c parallel. The LXX, by deleting line b, lends a more neutral meaning to yetzer.¹⁴¹ Even in the LXX, however, other passages (e.g., 37:3) make it likely that the Greek translator also would tend to view the yetzer as evil.

The other passage where yetzer has been recovered in the Hebrew is rendered by RSV as follows:

27:5 The kiln tests the potter's vessels;
so the test of a man is in his reasoning.
6 The fruit discloses the cultivation of a tree;
so the expression of a thought
discloses the cultivation of a man's mind [yetzer].

Porter has suggested that verse 5 should be used to elucidate the meaning of verse 6, with the result that the yetzer can be viewed in a rather positive sense, in much the same way as the later rabbis said that the evil yetzer could be put to positive use, and in fact was essential for life. Porter

139. Murphy, op. cit., p. 335.

140. S. Schechter and C. Taylor, The Wisdom of Ben Sira, Cambridge, 1899, p. XXXII. Cited also by Porter, op. cit., p. 137.

141. Murphy (loc. cit.), however, considers the additional line in the Hebrew to be a marginal gloss.

explains his interpretation as follows:¹⁴²

The husbandry of a tree, i.e., the digging and pruning, both tests the life of the tree and is the condition of its fruitfulness. So the thought-life of man is tested and developed by the yeçer, which like the fire of the potter's furnace and like the labor of the husbandman is severe and may prove destructive, but is essential to the making of a vessel and the growing of fruit. A man is tested and made not by appearances or deeds but by his thought or reasoning, and his thought is tested and made to be of worth by the evil inclinations within him, i.e., by moral struggle.

On the basis of the Syriac, there are two passages for which an original yetzer has been proposed: 17:31 and 21:11. In the first instance, the Syriac has preserved the term, while apparently not understanding the text.¹⁴³ Box and Oesterley render the verse as follows, following the LXX for the first line but emending the second line:¹⁴⁴

17:31 What is brighter than the sun? yet this faileth;
And (how much more) man, who (hath) the inclination [yetzer]
of flesh and blood!

If the reconstruction of the second line is correct (and that is much debated), then this would provide another instance of the negative connotation of yetzer.

The other instance where the Syriac reproduces yetzer is much more straightforward:

21:11 Whoever keeps the law controls his thoughts [yetzer]
And wisdom is the fulfillment of the fear of the Lord.

142. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

143. The Syriac has introduced an additional negative in the last phrase yielding: "So the man who does not subdue his yetzer because he is flesh and blood." Porter suggests that the LXX has mistaken the noun as a verb (*ibid.*, p. 143).

144. G. H. Box and W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Book of Sirach," APOT I, p. 378.

The LXX of this verse is ambiguous, but as Porter has noted, the original intent of the author is clear even if the LXX translator's intentions are not:¹⁴⁵ the yetzer is to be controlled by the keeping of the law. This is virtually identical with the later rabbinic teaching.

On the basis of the LXX, two other passages point in the direction of an original yetzer: 23:2 and 37:3. The first of these is suggested by the possible equivalent of yetzer (*διασώζουσα*) in the first line:

23:2 O that whips were set over my thoughts [*ἐπὶ τοῦ διασώζοντός*] ,
and the discipline of wisdom over my mind.

Sمند and Segal have both proposed an original yetzer,¹⁴⁶ and again the connotation of yetzer is definitely negative.

The situation in 37:3 is rather different, for where an original yetzer had been suspected, the Hebrew has yielded a divergent text. Box-Oesterley¹⁴⁷ and Levi¹⁴⁸ propose emending the Hebrew on the basis of the LXX, thereby preserving the yetzer. This is also the course adopted by RSV:

37:3 O evil imagination, why were you formed
to cover the land with deceit?

Even if one cannot accept this text as the original Hebrew, it can still be said that at a very early date, i.e., late second century B.C. when Sirach was translated, the Greek translator anticipated "the question so deeply felt by the author of Fourth Ezra as to the origin of the evil power in man's

145. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

146. R. Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach*, Berlin, 1906; and M. Segal, *spr bn syr' hślm*, Jerusalem, 1953. Both are cited by Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

147. APOT I, p. 443.

148. Cited by Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

nature."¹⁴⁹

In addition to the specific usage of yetzer (extant or conjectured) in Ecclesiasticus, there are related terms and concepts which also point in the direction of the later rabbinic teaching. First of all, there is the tension between God's responsibility for creating all things, including the yetzer, and man's responsibility for choosing his own destiny. God's responsibility for all things is most clearly taught in 33:10-15. The Hebrew of 11:15 confirms this view.¹⁵⁰ The tension is most obvious in 15:11-20 which emphasizes man's responsibility, yet right in the heart of the passage is 15:14 which is particularly jarring in the Hebrew, but even noteworthy in the LXX.

Secondly, there are passages which refer to the struggle which comes from within. The following three passages all contain the term ἐπιθυμία in the LXX, so the occurrence of an original yetzer is not likely, but the concepts are striking, nevertheless:

5:2 Do not follow your inclination and strength,
walking according to the desires [ἐπιθυμίας] of your heart.

18:30 Do not follow your base desires [ἐπιθυμίᾳ] ,
but restrain your appetites.

149. Ibid. The views of the LXX translator regarding the yetzer are ambiguous. Porter hints that he deliberately deleted line b from 15:14, because it ascribed evil to God too directly (op. cit., p. 140). The same motivation could apply to the change effected by the LXX to 11:15. Hebrew renders "Sin and upright ways are from the Lord," but the LXX reads: "Love and upright ways...." Also, the misunderstood verb in 17:6, when taken as a noun could only be understood in a positive sense, indicating that the LXX translator did not uniformly consider the yetzer to be negative. Yet it is the LXX which preserved most clearly the complaint in 37:3!

150. "Sin and upright ways are from the Lord", instead of the LXX: "Love and upright ways...."

23:4 O Lord, Father and God of my life,
do not give me haughty eyes,
5 and remove from me evil desire [*ἐπιθυμίαν*].

In summary, then, the following basic characteristics of the later rabbinic doctrine are present in Ecclesiasticus: God is responsible for the evil yetzer (15:14, cf. 33:10-15 and the Heb. of 11:15); the yetzer is within man (21:11; 27:5; cf. 21:27); the yetzer is evil (17:31; 23:2), but can also serve a useful function in man's life (27:5-6). Less is said in Ecclesiasticus about gaining victory over the yetzer, but it is evident that man is expected to determine his own destiny (15:11-20; cf. 18:30; 23:2), and the antidote for the evil yetzer is the same as claimed by the rabbis, i.e., the study of the law (21:11).

ii. Dead Sea Scrolls. The extent to which the Qumran scrolls reflect the elements of the evil yetzer concept has been the subject for vigorous scholarly discussion. As noted previously, the majority of scholars have chosen to interpret the scrolls, including the famous section on the Two Spirits (IQS 3:13-4:26), in terms of a cosmological and deterministic dualism along the lines of the Zoroastrian system. Others, most notably Wernberg-Møller, have interpreted the Two Spirits in psychological terms as having reference to the warring elements within man.¹⁵¹ Standing in a more moderate position are those who see both a cosmological and a psychological aspect in the IQS doctrine of the Two Spirits. Otzen, for example, has noted the two different levels on which the struggle between good and evil takes place: the microcosmic level (in man), and

151. Wernberg-Møller, 1961, pp. 413-441. See also note 102 supra.

the macrocosmic level (in the universe).¹⁵² Osten-Sacken, approaching the question from the direction of the history of tradition, has attempted to demonstrate three successive stages of interpretation in IQS 3:13-4:26, with only the last stage (4:23b-26) referring specifically to the anthropological aspect.¹⁵³ But regardless of the position taken relative to the Two Spirits of IQS, there is firm evidence for something very much like the rabbinic doctrine of the evil yetzer elsewhere in the DSS, primarily in IQH, but also in CDC and in portions of IQS outwith the treatise on the Two Spirits. Murphy has pointed out, that, in keeping with the biblical usage, IQH uses yetzer both in the more substantial sense of "creature", as well as in the sense of "nature", "disposition", or "tendency".¹⁵⁴ The former usage is evident in the frequent phrase, "creature of clay", as well as in other contexts implying man's frailty and weakness. Of all the contexts where IQH uses the phrase "creature of clay", only in 11:3 is it not associated in some sense with sin.¹⁵⁵ Of those passages where yetzer is used in the sense of "nature" or "disposition", two use it in a neutral sense, indicating a determination or a disposition to do good (IQH 7:13; 15:13). Elsewhere, yetzer is clearly associated with evil (IQH 5:5f; 5:31f; 7:3f; 7:16; 11:20f; cf. CDC 2:16; IQS 5:5).¹⁵⁶ Of particular interest because of possible connections with usage in IV Ezra are those contexts which place yetzer in parallel with heart (IQH 5:31f), or seem to be using it as a

152. Otzen, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

153. Osten-Sacken, op. cit., pp. 11-27, 165-169, 182-184.

154. Murphy, op. cit., pp. 339-344. 155. Ibid., p. 339.

156. See ibid., pp. 342-343 for comment.

synonym for heart (IQH 5:5f; 7:16; IQS 5:5). These last three references are rendered by Murphy¹⁵⁷ as follows:

IQH 5:5f According to my guilt you judged me and did not abandon me to the lusts (or plots) of my $\gamma\delta$.

IQH 7:16 And you know the $\gamma\delta$ of your servant.

IQH 5:5 ...to straying after his heart and his eyes and the desire of his $\gamma\delta$ and ... to circumcise in the community the foreskin of the $\gamma\delta$ and obstinacy.

The first and last references above clearly link the yetzer with evil, and the second occurrence of yetzer in IQS 5:5 makes it virtually synonymous with heart.

While the references to the specific usage of yetzer are rather straightforward, this same state of affairs does not prevail in the discussion about the Two Spirits in IQS. Seitz has suggested the means by which the Qumran exegetes arrived at their version of the yetzer doctrine in the treatise on the Two Spirits.¹⁵⁸ First, he notes the use of yetzer for heart in IQS 5:5, but then suggests that the Qumran exegetes referred to Zech. 12:1b which speaks of God "forming the spirit of man within him." This is the very expression used in IQH 4:30-31:¹⁵⁹

I know that righteousness does not pertain to man, and a perfect way is not with any son of man. To God Most High pertain all works of righteousness, and the way of man is not steadfast, except by the spirit which God formed for him.

A few lines further in 4:38 comes this striking assertion:

157. Ibid., p. 343.

158. Seitz, op. cit., p. 94-95.

159. Translation by Seitz, ibid., p. 94. His reference is to plate 38 (=IQH 4) of the Sukenik edition (1955). A point apparently overlooked by Seitz is the conjunction of "spirit" and $\gamma\delta$, though admittedly the latter is a verb here, and not the noun.

It is not for man (to do as) Thou hast done, for Thou hast created both righteous and wicked.¹⁶⁰

This is the thought of Is. 45:7 which likewise states that God creates both good and evil. It would only remain, then, for the covenanters to conclude from such references as I Sam. 16:14 that God has two antithetic spirits at his control. Thus, according to Seitz, one arrives at the Two Spirits of IQS.¹⁶¹

It was Wernberg-Møller, however, who organized in detail the arguments in favor of the view that the Two Spirits are simply to be considered as two warring elements within man. He concludes that: "The difference between IQS and the rabbinic doctrine is thus one of terminology only."¹⁶² But not everyone has been convinced. H. G. May, arguing specifically against Wernberg-Møller, swings the pendulum back in the direction of an external, cosmological dualism, while admitting that there may also be the aspect of the internal battle as well.¹⁶³ Pryke, though listing Wernberg-Møller in the excellent bibliography attached to his article, does not discuss Wernberg-Møller's position. He concludes, rather, that:

The main difference between the later Rabbinic and more carefully worked out doctrine of the two 'impulses' and that of the Two Spirits lies in the fact that the former is concerned with the individual, whereas the community sees mankind divided into two groups.¹⁶⁴

It would seem unnecessary, and indeed unfortunate, to be forced to choose either alternative exclusively, for there are sound arguments for interpreting the Two Spirits psychologically, just as there are strong arguments for

160. Seitz's translation, *ibid.*

161. This is an abbreviated version of Seitz's argument. See *ibid.*, pp. 92-95 for complete discussion.

162. Wernberg-Møller, 1961, p. 423. 163. H. G. May, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

164. Pryke, *op. cit.*, p. 351.

interpreting them cosmologically. In later rabbinic tradition, the yetzer could be both internal and external, and on occasion it was equated with Satan.¹⁶⁵ Wernberg-Møller has presented convincing arguments for recognizing the psychological aspects of the Two Spirits, but he has not been quite faithful to his own methodological principles in seeming to deny the cosmological aspects. With reference to methodology, he states:

And in the same way as we cannot hope to understand these writings unless we see them against their Scriptural background in the same way it must be regarded as methodologically unjustifiable to deal with each section of any one of the manuscripts in isolation, either from the context in which the section concerned stands, or from the rest of the Qumran writings.¹⁶⁶

From the Scriptural side, May has shown how well the cosmic battles of the OT link up with the cosmic elements of Qumran.¹⁶⁷ And as far as the Qumran literature itself is concerned, one can hardly be content with mere psychological principles once IQM is drawn into the discussion. On both accounts, Wernberg-Møller has given a one-sided picture. Nevertheless, it would appear that the following aspects of IQS 3:13-4:26 would justify the maintenance of at least some element of the psychological aspect for which Wernberg-Møller is arguing:

- a. IQS 3:21-24 indicates that the angel of darkness can lead astray the elect, implying that the division between the two groups is not clear-cut and permanent.
- b. IQS 4:20-23 states that God will purify man at the time of the visitation, indicating that evil elements are indeed present within the community itself, and the people of the community.
- c. IQS 4:23-26 specifically states that the struggle takes place in the heart of man.

165. See references in notes 122 and 124 above.

166. Wernberg-Møller, 1961, p. 416. 167. H. G. May, op. cit., pp. 7-14.

Significantly, the above citations represent each of the three levels of tradition delimited by Osten-Sacken. These passages do not eliminate the cosmological interpretation, but they do point to a vestige of the psychological tradition at each stage. Thus, while Osten-Sacken's study has its attraction, Otzen's earlier characterization of microcosm/macrocosm¹⁶⁸ may still be the most suitable means of describing the contents of the treatise on the Two Spirits, as well as depicting the attitude of the community toward the problem of evil.

It would appear then, that there are two strands of tradition at Qumran which reveal elements of the later rabbinic teaching. One strand uses the term yetzer, the other centers on the term ruach. With this in mind, it is now possible to summarize the various elements of the evil yetzer tradition that are found in the DSS. Of the basic characteristics of the rabbinic teaching, at least two are evident in both the yetzer and the ruach strands of tradition at Qumran. First of all, God is responsible for creating evil, including the evil yetzer (or spirit): IQH 4:38 states that he has created the evil and the good; IQS 3:16-17, 25 establish that God both creates and controls the spirits; and IQH 15:13 states that the yetzer of every ruach is in his hand. When specific yetzer terminology is used, only the one (evil) yetzer seems to be present. If one includes the ruach terminology, then both the evil and the good are present.

Secondly, the yetzer is located within man. This is true both of yetzer (IQS 5:5) and ruach (IQS 4:23ff). Two lesser traits may also be

168. Otzen, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

noted, but they are not present in both strands of the tradition. The yetzer may be synonymous with heart (IQS 5:5), but it is only the ruach that seems to be personified (cf. IQS 3:21-24).

As far as obtaining victory over the yetzer is concerned, the parallels with the later rabbinic teaching are not so striking. In the first instance, the aspect of free-will and human responsibility, while present, is certainly not a cardinal dogma among the Qumran documents. CDC perhaps makes the most of the need for man to determine his own destiny:

CDC 2:14-16 Hear now, my sons, and I will uncover your eyes that you may see and understand the works of God, that you choose that which pleases Him and reject that which He hates, that you may walk perfectly in all His ways and not follow after thoughts of the guilty inclination [yetzer] and after eyes of lust.

Secondly, with reference to the law and good works as an antidote for the yetzer, there seems to be little to suggest an instrumental function for the study of the law and the performance of good works as a means of controlling the yetzer. Man is expected to practice good works and to overcome his evil yetzer (IQS 5:1-7), but these activities were probably considered as the natural outgrowth of one's "lot", rather than as a means of overcoming the evil yetzer. Thirdly, the end of the evil spirit in man will come at the end of time, as is evident from IQS 4:20-26.

Thus, from two rather different directions, Qumran has produced significant elements of the later rabbinic doctrine of the evil yetzer. Basic characteristics of the teaching are evident in both the yetzer and ruach traditions, but the determinism of the community has muted the speculation about gaining victory over the yetzer. There are allusions which imply the need to overcome the yetzer, but the emphasis of the later rabbinic teaching is lacking.

iii. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. The placing of the Testaments at a particular point in a more-or-less chronological scheme of development is hazardous because of the lively debate over dating.¹⁶⁹ For purposes of discussion, they are here assumed to be roughly contemporaneous with the DSS. They share many of the features of the scrolls, yet with regard to the elements of the evil yetzer tradition, there are some distinct differences. There are also some interesting points of contact with Ecclesiasticus, most notably the emphasis on personal responsibility. The Testaments are similar to the DSS in that they develop elements of the evil yetzer tradition in two different strands, involving the same terms (or their equivalents) as the DSS: yetzer (διαβόλιον) and ruach (πνεῦμα). In the Testaments, however, both the evil and the good yetzer are made explicit whereas in the DSS, only the evil yetzer is prominent. In the "spirit" strand, the Testaments multiply the spirits, i.e., they do not speak so precisely of two spirits in man, while at the same time they focus more specifically on man's experience rather than on cosmic aspects.

The evidence for the specific yetzer strand of tradition is based on the LXX equivalents for yetzer. The term διαβόλιον occurs frequently

169. For the view that the Testaments are a second-third cent. Christian production making use of earlier Jewish material, see M. de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Assen 1953. De Jonge has subsequently modified his position somewhat, making greater use of material from Qumran. See M. de Jonge, "Christian Influence in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," NT 4 (1960), pp. 182-235. See Eissfeldt, Intro., pp. 631-636 and Denis, op. cit., pp. 49-59 for discussion of the problems of dating and provenance. Osten-Saken, op. cit., pp. 200-205, sees the Testaments representing a later stage of tradition than the DSS because the dualism is mitigated in such passages as T.Jud. 20:1ff where the "spirit of understanding" is introduced. See also Jürgen Becker, Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen, Leiden, 1970.

in the Testaments according to the index in Charles' edition.¹⁷⁰ The term $\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\mu\alpha$ in T. N. 2:5 is also a likely equivalent of yetzer. The basis for seeking evidence of the later rabbinic teaching in the "spirit" strand of tradition in addition to the yetzer strand, is found in the studies of Seitz¹⁷¹ and Otzen,¹⁷² both of whom establish close links between the teachings of Qumran and the Testaments in this respect. Wernberg-Møller's dictum that the difference between the two Spirits of IQS and the rabbinic doctrine is one of "terminology only",¹⁷³ is also of significance here. Though the Testaments show little inclination for synthesizing these two elements into a common tradition,¹⁷⁴ it should still be possible to note aspects of the rabbinic teachings in both strands and to recognize them as precursors of the more carefully organized later rabbinic doctrine. The demons and spirits are so pervasive in the Testaments (Belial himself is mentioned 31 times),¹⁷⁵ that to attempt a thorough correlation between the "spirits" and

170. Charles, The Greek Versions of the Testaments, 1908, p. 304: R. 4:9; S. 4:8; Jud. 11:1; 13:2 (β -ag); 13:8; 18:3; Iss. 4:5; 6:2; D. 4:2; 4:7 (β); G. 5:3 (β -d); 5:7; 7:3; A. 1:3, 5, 8, 9; 3:2; Jos. 2:6; B. 6:1, 4.

171. Seitz, op. cit., pp. 82-95.

172. Otzen, op. cit., pp. 125-157.

173. Wernberg-Møller, 1961, p. 423.

174. But Seitz has noted the way that "certain passages seem to give these concepts peculiar connexions with one another", e.g., in T.A. 1:3ff (op. cit., p. 91).

175. Cited by Otzen, op. cit., p. 142, based on the index of Charles' edition, The Greek Versions of the Testaments, 1908.

the "inclinations" would be beyond the scope of this survey, but elements of both traditions are noted in the summary below when they show some bearing on the later teaching.

Regarding the four general characteristics of the rabbinic teaching, there are traces of at least two. First, both the evil inclination and the good are created by God:

T.A. 1:3 Two ways hath God given to the sons of men, and two inclinations [διαβούλια].

T.N. 2:5 For there is no inclination [πλάσμα] or thought which the Lord knoweth not, for He created every man after his own image (cf. larger context of 2:2-6).

Secondly, the yetzer is within man. This is evident from virtually all the passages where διαβούλιον occurs. In the "spirit" tradition, also, there is evidence that the spirit operates from within. In addition to the many passages which speak of the spirits motivating the various actions of man, the following passage is specific:

T.N. 2:2 For as the potter knoweth the vessel, how much it is to contain, and bringeth clay accordingly, so also doth the Lord make the body after the likeness of the spirit, and according to the capacity of the body doth he implant the spirit.

In connection with this internal battle, it is of interest to note that the good inclination can be overcome (T.Jud. 11:1; 13:8; 18:3), and that the evil spirits can also reign supreme (T.G. 6:2; T.D. 2:4).

As far as gaining victory over the yetzer is concerned, the Testaments appear to have all three of the essential elements of the later teaching. First, man is wholly responsible for choosing his destiny and determining which inclination (T.R. 4:9; T.B. 6:1) or which spirit (T.L. 19:1; T. Jud. 20:1-2) he will follow. Secondly, the law and good works can be instrumental

in overcoming the evil inclination:

T.A. 3:2 But from wickedness flee away, destroying the (evil) inclination [τὸ διαβόλιον] ¹⁷⁶ by your good works.

T.G. 4:7 For the spirit of hatred worketh together with Satan, through hastiness of spirit, in all things to men's death; but the spirit of love worketh together with the law of God in long-suffering unto the salvation of men (cf. T.L. 19:1).

Thirdly, evil will finally be overcome by the Messiah. The evidence here is from the "spirit" tradition (T.L. 18:12; T. Jud. 25:3; T.Z. 9:8 bdg). It should be added, though, that Belial can also be made to flee from the individual before the final denouement (T.S. 3:5; 4:7; T.I. 7:7; T.B. 5:2; T.D. 5:1; T.N. 8:4), which is a more fluid situation than one finds in the later teaching. Though the rabbinic tradition is also aware of the personification of the evil yetzer, the Rabbis usually prefer to speak in terms of "ruling over" the yetzer rather than causing it to depart.

In summary, it can be said, that, though the partial dualism of the Testaments has modified the elements of the yetzer tradition, several of the prominent characteristics of the later teaching are present. This is true both of the yetzer tradition proper, as well as of the "spirit" tradition. In contrast with the DSS, though, the element of personal responsibility is much more prominent in the Testaments, thus, in this respect at least, more closely approximating the later teaching.

iv. IV Ezra, Apocalypse of Moses, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. Aside from the rather substantial data relating to the yetzer in Ecclesiasticus,

176. Charles' MS α . MSS β , A, S¹ have τὸν διάβολον as does M. de Jonge's text (Testamenta XII Patriarchum, Edited according to Cambridge University Library MS Ff I. 24, fol. 203a-262b, with Short Notes, Leiden, 1964).

DSS, and the Testaments, there are just a few hints in other Palestinian sources which have a bearing on the topic. IV Ezra, of course, belongs within the yetzer tradition, but it will be discussed in depth in the main body of the study. In the Apocalypse of Moses, there is a possible reference to one aspect of the yetzer teaching:

Apoc. Mos. 13:5 And they shall no longer sin before his face, for the evil heart shall be taken from them and there shall be given them a heart understanding the good and to serve God only.

If the evil heart represents the evil yetzer as Wells suggests,¹⁷⁷ then this establishes a helpful link with the yetzer teaching in IV Ezra where the evil heart is much in evidence.

It would also be well to mention here the tendency of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan¹⁷⁸ to reinterpret the Pentateuch in terms of the yetzer. For example, Deut. 31:21 in the OT simply has "yetzer", but it is rendered as "evil yetzer" in Pseudo-Jonathan.¹⁷⁹ Similarly, Gen. 4:7 is paraphrased: "In thy hand I have given the Evil Yezer, and thou shalt rule over him both for good and for evil."¹⁸⁰ Also, Deut. 30:6 is reworked, yielding: "He

177. Wells, APOT II, p. 144.

178. Pseudo-Jonathan has been up-dated until at least the seventh century (see Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, ed. by G. Vermes, F. Millar, P. Vermes, M. Black, I, rev. Eng. ed., Edinburgh, 1973, p. 104), so can hardly be considered as an authentic source for IV Ezra, but it may reflect earlier tendencies which could facilitate the solution to interpretative problems in IV Ezra.

179. Noted by Schechter, op. cit., p. 242; cf. also Targum to Ps. 103:14 which takes the simple term yetzer (RSV: frame) and interprets it as "Evil Yezer which causes to sin" (ibid., p. 243).

180. Schechter's translation, ibid., p. 270; cf. also G. Kuiper, "Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: A Study of Genesis 4:7-10, 16," Augustinianum 10 (1970), pp. 533-70.

will abolish the evil yetzer from the world and create the good yetzer."¹⁸¹
 Another characteristic of Pseudo-Jonathan, which incidentally, is significant for IV Ezra, is the tendency to translate "heart" by yetzer.¹⁸²

c. Hellenistic Jewish Sources

i. Philo. The yetzer concept is virtually non-existent in the more Hellenistic sources of Judaism, although attempts have been made to establish its usage in Philo and in II Enoch. Both Tennant¹⁸³ and Williams¹⁸⁴ seek to find traces of the yetzer doctrine in Philo, but in the words of Williams, it is only there in a "defaced and not easily recognisable form".¹⁸⁵ Not only is one faced with the problem of establishing the proper equivalents for original Semitic terminology, but, in addition, Philo's abhorrence of attributing evil directly to God and his inclination towards a metaphysical dualism make it unlikely that he would make use of the yetzer teaching.

ii. II Enoch. In II Enoch 30:16, Charles finds an allusion to the yetzer:

I knew his nature, he did not know his nature. Therefore his ignorance is a woe to him that he should sin, and I appointed death on account of his sin.¹⁸⁶

181. Erroneously cited as Deut. 30:4 by Schechter, op. cit., p. 291.

182. Ibid., p. 258, for list of citations.

183. Tennant, op. cit., pp. 138-139, is skeptical whether the yetzer teaching can be detected in Philo.

184. Williams, op. cit., pp. 81-84.

185. Ibid., p. 83.

186. The translation is Morfill's from Morfill and Charles, op. cit., p. 42.

Charles is of the opinion that the ignorance mentioned here is Adam's ignorance of "his nature with its good and evil impulses".¹⁸⁷ But there is no real evidence that II Enoch should be placed in the yetzer tradition. Charles argues that the yetzer doctrine has been Platonized;¹⁸⁸ Porter argues for the essential Jewishness of the author's concept of sin.¹⁸⁹ In any case, the yetzer is something read into 30:16, rather than read out of it.

D. Summary and Introduction to the Problem in IV Ezra

By way of introducing the problem in IV Ezra, the results of the preceding survey may be summarized as follows:

A. Physical Evil.

Virtually all the sources of Judaism, both early and late, accept the fact of physical evil as part of man's earthly existence. In the later sources, however, the ideas are developed that, in primeval times there was no evil, and that, in the end time, evil would again be no more. Although the attempts to establish the reasons for the presence of physical evil are also later in developing, in the intertestamental Palestinian sources, physical evil, including death, are rather easily attributed to the sin of Adam and Eve, or to the machinations of the Watchers. Hellenistic sources, too, though tending to attribute evil to the inherent weaknesses of matter,

187. Ibid., p. 42, and APOT II, p. 450, note on II Enoch 30:16.

188. Morfill and Charles, op. cit., pp. 42-43 and APOT II, p. 450.

189. Porter, op. cit., pp. 154-156.

are not devoid of speculation about the sin of Adam and Eve and that of the Watchers.

B. Moral Evil

At a very early stage, in fact in the OT itself, human moral evil was considered to be universal, but fully formulated accounts of the origin of moral evil in man are late in developing. Only in the intertestamental writings do the questions about origins arise. Furthermore, the Palestinian and Hellenistic sources seem to give quite different emphases in their attempts to arrive at viable solutions. This is evident in the surveys of the main traditions which attempt to provide an explanation for moral evil in man.

C. Attempts to Fix Responsibility for Evil

1. Individual Responsibility

In spite of the attempts to shift responsibility for evil from the individual to a prior cause, man's responsibility to choose his own destiny is emphasized in virtually all sources. Even those sources which do not emphasize it, and in fact seem to preclude it, such as the DSS, retain vestiges of the concept of freedom and responsibility. Among the DSS, CDC is the most notable example.

2. Responsibility Placed on Adam (or Eve)

The attempts to make Adam (or Eve) responsible for a moral taint that was passed on to all future generations are surprisingly few. The Books of Adam and Eve represent the most advanced speculation, but even here, there are hints that the fate incurred as the result of the primal sin was not all-encompassing. IV Ezra adds some data to the rather scanty list of comments relating to Adam's sin, but there is so little evidence bearing directly on

the question from either Palestinian or Hellenistic sources, that this means of establishing responsibility for evil can hardly be said to be a firm tradition by the time of IV Ezra.

3. Responsibility Placed on a Supernatural Evil Personality (Satan)

The tendency to attribute evil to Satan developed quickly from shallow OT roots into luxuriant intertestamental foliage. This "solution" is quite prominent within Palestinian sources, but is less so in Hellenistic sources. Wherever Satan does appear, however, he is not an unconquerable foe, and man is still expected to determine his own destiny.

4. Responsibility Placed on God: the Evil Yetzer

Palestinian sources are again predominant in making use of the yetzer concept, and it appears in sources of great diversity; from Ecclesiasticus, on the one hand, linked with a vigorous monotheism, to the Testaments and DSS on the other hand, in conjunction with a dominant ethical dualism. Attempts have been made to detect the concept in Philo, but the parallels are remote. In none of the sources surveyed prior to IV Ezra, is the yetzer employed as a means of eliminating man's guilt or reducing his responsibility. The yetzer may lead to sin, but man is still expected to control his evil tendencies and to determine his own destiny.

On the Palestinian side of the ledger, all four attempted "solutions" to the problem of moral evil can be found woven into the fabric of a single source. But in Hellenistic sources, very little use was made of the last three, for another solution to the problem of evil was readily available in the concept of inherently evil matter. In this alternative Hellenistic solution, there was provided not only a convenient means of mitigating man's

responsibility to choose his own destiny, but also a means whereby God might be relieved of his responsibility for creating evil. This state of affairs presented a serious threat to monotheism, for strict monotheism permits no such excuses for God or for man. Thus on a priori grounds alone, Palestinian Judaism could maintain a much closer guard over monotheism than could its Hellenistic counterpart. Though the early Hellenistic sources vigorously affirm the primacy of God over all his creation, by turning towards metaphysical dualism as a solution to the problem of evil, they open the door for Jewish and Christian gnostic deviations.

It is on this boundary between "orthodox" Judaism and gnostic deviations that the discussions about IV Ezra stand today. In recent continental research, it has been suggested that the dialogue format of IV Ezra holds the solution to the interpretation of the book. Ezra is seen to be the spokesman for an aberrant, gnosticizing heresy, while Uriel is the defender of the Pharisaic tradition. The problem, then, is essentially this: Does Ezra represent the gnostic view, thus making the book into a piece of anti-gnostic polemic, or are both Ezra and Uriel simply working through the problem of evil within the "accepted limits" of orthodoxy and simply restating--in a more acute form--the agony that seems to have plagued the Jewish people throughout their tortuous history? The view taken here is that the latter alternative is the correct one, and that the way in which the author integrates the elements of the various solutions to the problem of evil into both sides of the dialogue demonstrates that the views attributed both to Ezra and to Uriel are in fact representative of Judaism proper--a distraught Judaism, to be sure, but in no way an heretical Judaism.

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTORY MATTERS AND A SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF RESEARCH

As a means of establishing the proper background for the present study, brief mention needs to be made of the relevant introductory matters pertaining to IV Ezra. In addition, the issues to which the present study addresses itself must be placed in proper perspective by means of an historical survey of the relevant aspects of IV Ezra research.

A. Preliminary Aspects1. Name of the Apocalypse

The nomenclature of the Ezra literature, both canonical and non-canonical, reflects a thoroughly confusing situation.¹ The Ezra Apocalypse, which is

1. A convenient tabular view of the varied nomenclature used for the Ezra books is given by Nigel Turner in connection with his article, "Esdras, Books of," in IDB II, p. 141. For additional discussion, see Jacob M. Myers, I and II Esdras (Anchor Bible), Garden City, New York, 1974, pp. 107-108; G.H. Box, The Ezra Apocalypse, London, 1912, p. iiif; Robert L. Bensly and M.R. James, The Fourth Book of Ezra (Text and Studies III, No. 2), Cambridge, 1895, pp. xxivff. The title "II Esdras" usually refers to the book in the Protestant apocrypha, but also has been used for Nehemiah (Vulgate, Great Bible of 1539). In addition, the LXX refers to Ezra-Nehemiah together as Esdras β . In the Latin textual tradition, MS Complutensis adds a further variant by designating the Ezra Apocalypse as III Esdras.

the book here under consideration, forms chapters 3-14 of the book designated as II Esdras in the Protestant apocrypha. Though not absolutely foolproof, the titles "IV Ezra" and "Ezra Apocalypse" have been generally accepted and are adopted here as the most convenient means of distinguishing the apocalypse proper from the Christian additions in chapters 1-2, 15-16, and as a means of avoiding possible confusion with other Ezra books.²

2. Manuscripts and Versions

Unfortunately, the Ezra Apocalypse is available only in secondary or tertiary versions. It is generally agreed that the most significant of these is the Latin,³ which has been accepted as the basic textual authority for both

2. In addition to the possibilities for confusion mentioned in the previous note, the Ezra Apocalypse (IV Ezra) must also be distinguished from the later Greek Apocalypsis Esdrae which was published by Constantinus Tischendorf in Apocalypses Apocryphae, Lipsiae, 1866, pp. 24-33.

3. Undoubtedly, one of the most significant events as far as the Latin text is concerned, was the publication by Robert L. Bensly of The Missing Fragment of the Latin Translation of the Fourth Book of Ezra, Cambridge, 1875. Just prior to this event, O. F. Fritzsche had published a Latin text of considerable merit in Libri Veteris Testamenti: Pseudepigraphi Selecti, Lipsiae, 1871. Because of Bensly's discovery, however, a new critical edition of the text was required; one was prepared by Bensly but published posthumously with an introduction by M. R. James in 1895 (cited above in note 1). Bruno Violet had additional MSS at his disposal when he published a critical Latin text in parallel with German translations of the Syriac, Ethiopic, and two Arabic versions, and a Latin translation of the Armenian version in Die Esra-Apocalypse (IV. Esra), I: Die Überlieferung (GCS 18), Leipzig, 1910. Further Latin MSS were brought to light by Donatien de Bruyne, "Quelques nouveaux documents pour la critique textuelle de l'apocalypse d'Esdras," Revue bénédictine 31 (1920), pp. 43-47. These were taken into account by Violet in his second volume, Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt (GCS 32), Leipzig, 1924 (cited as Violet II). A convenient summary of the Latin MSS is given by Léon Gry, Les dires prophétiques d'Esdras (IV. Esdras), I, Paris, 1938, pp. XI-XIV. In connection with the Latin tradition, mention could also be made of the article by Bruce Metzger ("The 'Lost' Section of II Esdras (= IV Ezra),"

the RSV and NEB translations of IV Ezra into English. Second in importance among the versions is the Syriac, extant only in the one exemplar in the seventh century Codex Ambrosianus now found in Milan.⁴ The Ethiopic, edited by Dillmann,⁵ agrees with the Latin for the most part, though it is somewhat more paraphrastic. On occasion it produces unique and helpful readings. There are two recensions of the Arabic, one of which was edited by Ewald (Ar-1)⁶ and the other by Gildemeister (Ar-2).⁷ These appear in German translation in Violet I. Both Arabic versions are very free and are of minimal value in reconstructing the original text, though it was the Arabic which apparently first suggested the solution to the problem of the missing

JBL 76 (1957), pp. 153-156) relating how the missing fragment "discovered" by Bensly wasn't quite as lost as it had been made to appear.

4. A fine critical text of the Syriac is now available in The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version, Part IV, fascicle 3: Apocalypse of Baruch, 4 Esdras, Leiden, 1973. Violet I also includes a German translation of the Syriac parallel with the Latin text. The Leiden edition of the Syriac text of Baruch does not include the epistle, so the edition of M. Kmosko must be consulted (Epistola Baruch filii Neriae, text and Latin translation, in Patrologia Syriaca [Pars prima], t. II, Paris, 1907, cols. 1214-1237).

5. August Dillmann, Biblia Veteris Testamenti aethiopica, V: Libri apocryphi, Berlin, 1894. References in the present study are to the German translation based on Dillmann which appears in Violet I.

6. H. G. A. Ewald, Das vierte Ezrabuch: nach seinem Zeitalter, seinen arabischen Übersetzung und einer neuen Wiederherstellung, in Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, XI, Göttingen, 1863 (designated as Arabic-1 by Hermann Gunkel in "Das 4. Buch Esra", Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testament, II, hrsg. von E. Kautzsch, Tübingen, 1900, p. 332). The present study makes use of the German translation of Ewald in Violet I. Because of the problems connected with the use of typescript, the Arabic versions are designated here as Ar-1, Ar-2.

7. Ioannes Gildemeister, Esdrae liber quartus Arabice e codice Vaticano, Bonn, 1877 (styled Arabic-2 by Gunkel, loc. cit.). Citations in the present study are from the German translation of Gildemeister in Violet I.

section of chapter 7 in the Latin.⁸ The Armenian version is likewise exceptionally paraphrastic, and though it has received recent attention by Stone,⁹ provides little assistance for the criticism of the text. The Georgian version is perhaps comparable to the Ethiopic as far as the authority of its readings is concerned, though from a genealogical point of view it is quite distant from the original. According to Blake, both the extant MSS are dependent on an Armenian version, though the Armenian Vorlage is apparently unrelated to the extant version published in the Armenian Bible.¹⁰ Finally, there is a Coptic (Sahidic) fragment of 13:29-46, published by Leipoldt and Violet, who suggested that it dated from the sixth to eighth century and reflects a Greek recension.¹¹

For purposes of the present study, Violet I has been generally accepted

8. See MF, p. 1.

9. Michael Stone, "Some Features of the Armenian Version of IV Ezra," Le Museon 79 (1966), pp. 387-400; "Some Remarks on the Textual Criticism of IV Ezra," HTR 60 (1967), pp. 107-15; "Manuscripts and Readings of Armenian IV Ezra," Textus, VI, Jerusalem, 1968, pp. 48-61; Concordance and Texts of the Armenian Version of IV Ezra (Oriental Notes and Studies, no. 11), Jerusalem, 1971. The Latin translation which Violet I reproduces is that of H. J. Petermann (based on four MSS: ABCD) from A. Hilgenfeld's Messias Judaeorum, Lipsiae, 1869, pp. 378-433.

10. R. P. Blake, "The Georgian Version of Fourth Esdras from the Jerusalem Manuscript," HTR 19 (1926), p. 307. The Jerusalem MS (=I) is the more important of the two main MSS. The other one (Athos = O) consists mainly of excerpts and is discussed by Blake in "The Georgian Text of Fourth Esdras from the Athos Manuscript," HTR 22 (1929), pp. 57-105. Blake is of the opinion that the Georgian and the Ethiopic go back to a single archetype (HTR 19, p. 309). Stone also links the Georgian and Ethiopic together and considers them to be much more valuable for text critical purposes than either of the two Arabic versions or the extant Armenian version (Stone, "Some Remarks," p. 115).

11. Johannes Leipoldt and Bruno Violet, "Ein saïdisches Bruchstück des vierten Esrabuches," Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde 41 (1904), Heft 2, pp. 138-140. See also Violet I, pp. xlf.

as the authority for the Latin text, though Bensly-James has also been consulted. The Syriac text consulted has been the critical edition published by the Peshitta Institute, Leiden. The Georgian text is cited from Blake's Latin translation. The remaining oriental versions are cited from Violet I. The Latin is retained as the most significant textual authority with the Syriac considered as a close second. The Ethiopic and Georgian are also of interest from the standpoint of textual criticism, though less so than the Latin and Syriac. The two Arabic recensions and the Armenian are really quite removed from the other four versions and differ radically even among themselves, so they are of very little use in recovering the original text.¹²

3. Original Language

Scholars are virtually agreed that the Ezra Apocalypse was originally written in a Semitic language. Several nineteenth century scholars were convinced that the author wrote in Greek,¹³ but Wellhausen successfully argued for a Semitic original¹⁴ though such had been suggested earlier by Ewald (1859),¹⁵ and even earlier by John Morinus (1633).¹⁶ After Wellhausen, the

12. This is essentially the opinion of Stone, "Some Remarks," p. 115.

13. Myers (pp. 118-119) notes that Lücke, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, Fritzsche, and Rosenthal, all supported the idea of a Greek original. Frank Zimmermann ("Underlying Documents of IV Ezra," JQR 51 [1960], p. 108) also cites H. St. John Thackeray (DB, ed. Hastings, I, p. 763f) as supporting the idea of a Greek original.

14. Julius Wellhausen, Skizzen und Vorarbeiten, VI, Berlin, 1899, pp. 234-240. Myers (p. 115) credits Wellhausen with being the first to present a "convincing argument" for a Hebrew original.

15. H. G. A. Ewald, in Geschichte des Volkes Israel, Bd. VII, 1859, cited by Violet I, p. LXII.

16. John Morinus, Exercitationes Biblicae de Hebraici Graecique textus

discussion has centered on whether the original was Hebrew or Aramaic.

Violet II had noted the presence of Aramaisms,¹⁷ but according to Myers, Gry was the first to argue for a wholly Aramaic original.¹⁸ The impact of Gry's argument is seriously weakened, however, because of the extent to which he has resorted to conjectural emendations.¹⁹ Most scholars since Wellhausen have been inclined towards the theory of a Hebrew original, and several have attempted to reconstruct portions of the Hebrew Vorlage.²⁰

Sinceritate, Paris, 1633, p. 225, cited by Joshua Bloch in "Was there a Greek Version of the Apocalypse of Ezra?", JQR 46 (1956), p. 309.

17. Violet II, p. XXXIX.

18. Myers, p. 117, citing Gry, op. cit. Joshua Bloch may also be cited as favoring an Aramaic original. In addition to the article already cited (JQR 46 [1956], pp. 309-320), Bloch also wrote "The Ezra Apocalypse: was it written in Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic?", JQR 48 (1957-58), pp. 279-294. For a criticism of Bloch's attempt to eliminate the Greek from the IV Ezra genealogy, see Stone, "Some Remarks," pp. 107ff. Zimmermann, op. cit., pp. 107-134, argues for a genealogy of Hebrew-Aramaic-Greek-Latin (p. 134). He also notes (p. 109) that Wellhausen actually changed his opinion and later favored an Aramaic original (see Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien, Berlin, p. 124, n. 1). C. C. Torrey also favored an Aramaic original (The Apocryphal Literature. A Brief Introduction, New Haven, 1945, p. 122).

19. See the rather harsh comments in the review of Gry by J. A. Montgomery, JBL 60 (1941), pp. 201-203. Stone also seeks to refute some of Gry's arguments ("Some Remarks," pp. 109-111).

20. See especially, Gunkel, Box, and Violet II. Also of interest here is the work of Armand Kaminka, who produced a number of interesting Hebrew reconstructions in connection with his hypothesis that the book was originally composed in the year 556 B. C. His study is entitled "Beiträge zur Erklärung der Esra-Apokalypse und zur Rekonstruktion ihres hebräischen Urtextes," MGWJ 76 (1932), 121-38, 206-12, 494-511, 604-7; MGWJ 77 (1933), pp. 339-55. This same series of articles apparently appeared under the same title as a monograph (Breslau, 1934, cited by Stone, "Some Remarks," p. 111). Zimmermann, op. cit., p. 107, also refers to another, apparently full-scale work, by Kaminka in Hebrew with a reconstructed Hebrew text of IV Ezra and accompanying discussion: Sefer Hazonot Assir Shealtiel (Book of Apocalypses of the Captive Shealtiel), Tel-Aviv, 1936. In addition to the attempts to recover the Hebrew original, many scholars have attempted to recover elements

B. Historical Survey of IV Ezra Research

In the survey that follows, primary attention will be paid to the history of the interpretation of IV Ezra rather than to textual matters. Since specific exegetical and interpretive problems will be dealt with in the main body of the study, the particular concern of the historical survey will be to focus on the way that past interpreters of the book have dealt with the form and structure of the book as a means of elucidating the content. This involves first, the seven-episode structure, and second, the dialogue format. It is the use of these elements as important factors in interpretation and as a means of understanding the purpose of the book that will set the stage for the main body of the study which follows. After the historical survey, a brief summary will be given of introductory material, which, though not central to the topic, is nevertheless of considerable importance. This will include such items as unity, authorship, relationships of the author to the rabbinic schools, and time and place of composition.

By way of introduction to the historical survey, it should be noted that much of the nineteenth century discussion of IV Ezra was quite preoccupied either with the eagle vision or with the criticism of the text. Because of

of the intermediate Greek translation as well. Gunkel, Box, and Violet II may be mentioned here since they have proposed Greek reconstructions as well as Hebrew. But in addition, those scholars of the nineteenth century who favored a Greek original can provide valuable suggestions. In particular may be mentioned A. Hilgenfeld (op. cit., pp. 36-113), who produced a complete reconstruction of the Greek text, and Gustav Volkmar who offered many suggested reconstructions of the Greek in Handbuch der Einleitung in die Apokryphen, II: Das vierte Buch Esra, Tübingen, 1863.

this, such stalwarts as Wellhausen²¹ and Schürer²² are not specifically mentioned in the following survey. A bibliographical note may also be added here, and that is simply to say that Volkmar (1863),²³ Schürer (1909),²⁴ Gry (1938),²⁵ and Harnisch (1969),²⁶ when taken together give rather exhaustive coverage of scholarly discussions of IV Ezra up to the present decade. Volkmar actually cites by century (from the second century) the sources which use or discuss material from IV Ezra. Volkmar is significant in another respect as well, since it was he who was the first "modern" scholar of note to divide IV Ezra into seven episodes.²⁷ Accordingly, the historical survey below begins with him.²⁸

21. Wellhausen (op. cit., pp. 234-249) is concerned mostly with the hypothesis of an Hebrew original and with various details of the eagle vision.

22. Emil Schürer (Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes in Zeitalter Jesu Christi, III vierte Auflage, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 315-335) outlines the contents of IV Ezra, deals with the original language, dating, and lists considerable bibliographical information, but does not dwell on the theological issues at stake in the book.

23. Volkmar, pp. 273-275, 374-395.

24. Schürer, op. cit., pp. 329-335.

25. Gry, op. cit. See the notes, especially in vol. I, on pp. XCIV-CXXIV, and in particular on pp. XCVI and CXIX.

26. Wolfgang Harnisch, Verhängnis und Verheissung der Geschichte, Göttingen, 1969. Harnisch includes comprehensive notes and a good bibliography.

27. Most scholars cite the 1863 work by Volkmar already noted above, but Earl Breech ("These Fragments I have Shored Against My Ruins: The Form and Function of 4 Ezra," JBL 92 (1973), p. 268) refers to Volkmar's earlier book (Das vierte Buch Esra und apokalyptische Geheimnisse überhaupt, Zurich, 1858, pp. 11-18) as the first elaboration of the seven-episode scheme. All references in the present study are to Volkmar, 1863.

28. For the convenience of the reader, the page references in the following historical survey are frequently cited in the text rather than in the notes.

1. Survey of the Significant Contributions to the Study of IV
Ezra with Particular Attention to the Study of Form and
Structure as Related to the Purpose of the Book

a. Volkmar (1863).²⁹ Both in his outline of the book and in his discussion of the author's purpose, Volkmar makes use of the seven-episode scheme upon which virtually all later interpreters have built. In his outline, he designates the first three episodes as "Die Theodizee" and the final four as "Die Verheissung" (pp. viii-ix), but in the body of his commentary he refers to the second part as "Zukunfts-Offenbarung" and singles out the final episode as the sealing of the whole book, which is thereby seen to come from the God-inspired Ezra just as much as the twenty-four books of the Bible itself (p. 331). Volkmar describes the purpose of the book as an attempt to assure the people of God of their inevitable victory over all God-hating world powers, and Rome in particular (p. 328). Thus it would appear that Volkmar would take the predominance of Uriel's point of view in the later episodes as indicative of the author's firm confidence in the end. Nevertheless, the author's deep personal convictions are fully recognized, for Volkmar describes the author as "einer der sittlich ernstesten, religiösesten und geistvollsten... pharisäischen Patrioten" (p. 329). Such a description could not be given without due consideration of the intensity of the Ezra speeches in episodes I-III. It may be noted also that Volkmar has called attention to the dialogue format by the way in which he has set out his German translation which appears

29. Page references in the text refer to Volkmar's 1863 publication. Perhaps it should be noted here that Myers (p. 137) in his bibliography, lists two separate entries under Volkmar, both dating from 1863. It would appear that what Myers lists as Esdra Propheta is simply the text and commentary portion of the work which is normally cited as Handbuch der Einleitung in die Apokryphen, II: Das vierte Buch Esra.

on pp. 214-272. In episodes I-IV, he has set in bold-face type the names of the interlocutors when there is a change of speaker within the dialogue. Thus, in a sense, Volkmar has laid the groundwork for recognition both of the seven-episode scheme as well as the dialogue format.

b. Rosenthal (1885).³⁰ Although Rosenthal does not appear to be directly concerned with either the seven-episode scheme or the dialogue format, he does show considerable interest in the purpose of the book. As far as Rosenthal is concerned, the national disaster of A.D. 70 looms so large that he considers the national aspects of Ezra's problems to supersede the problem of moral evil in man. He recognizes that the problem of moral evil and innocent suffering is prominent in the book and notes the similarity of the angel's answers in episode I to the answers which Job receives from God (p. 43). But because Ezra is concerned about the nation as well as the individual, Ezra cannot be satisfied as Job was. Rosenthal considers this greater problem which faced Ezra to be mirrored in episode IV where Ezra indicates to the woman that the sorrow of all Israel (the many) is much more important than her suffering for the loss of the one son (ibid.). Following the suggestion of Hausrath,³¹ Rosenthal holds that the author of IV Ezra attributed human moral evil to Adam's sin rather than to a defect in his original condition. Accordingly, the author's theodicy presents the difficulties of this life as a purification in preparation for the future world (p. 50). But this theodicy is strictly a supporting pillar for the real purpose of the book, namely, to

30. Franz Rosenthal, Vier apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba's: Assumptio Mosis, Das vierte Buch Esra, Die Apokalypse Baruch, Das Buch Tobi, Leipzig, 1885, pp. 39-71.

31. S. Hausrath, NTZG, 2. Aufl., Thl. 4, p. 67, cited by Rosenthal, p. 45.

prepare the people for the approaching demise of the eagle (Rome) and for the dawn of the messianic age. Although Rosenthal admits that the bulk of the book is taken up with the theodicy question, he thinks that the author was not really concerned with resolving this problem, or even in presenting the attractions of the age to come, but was simply seeking to vent his wrath against the hated Rome. The author's method reflects the "censor-style" of his time, depicting in cryptic form the burning hatred of the Jews for those who oppressed them (p. 52).

Rosenthal thinks that IV Ezra reflects the outlook and teachings of the pessimistic Eliezer b. Hyrkanos, but most of the parallels cited by him touch on relatively insignificant details.³² While Rosenthal is correct in stating that IV Ezra shows much less optimism for the future than does II Baruch,³³ the author of IV Ezra is much more largehearted than Rosenthal is willing to admit. True, Baruch is willing to admit Gentiles into the new kingdom, an aspect which is not made explicit in IV Ezra,³⁴ but it is the author of IV Ezra who agonizes over the fate of all mankind, while the author of II Baruch makes much greater use of the language of vengeance. It would appear that Rosenthal's preoccupation with noting parallels with rabbinic schools, and in particular with Eliezer b. Hyrkanos, has led him away from the author's real concern. A greater awareness of the dialogue tension

32. So, Léon Vaganay, Le problème eschatologique dans le IV^e livre d'Esdras, Paris, 1906, p. 26.

33. Note Rosenthal's discussion of II Baruch, op. cit., pp. 72-103.

34. See Rosenthal's argument on pp. 83ff.

between Ezra and Uriel would have tempered his evaluation of IV Ezra as a book written only for the few and the wise (p. 102).³⁵

c. Kabisch (1889).³⁶ A significant, if in some respects unfortunate event in the interpretation of IV Ezra was the publication of Richard Kabisch's study on the sources of IV Ezra. While recognizing the division into seven episodes, Kabisch suggests that theodicy and eschatology cannot be neatly divided as Volkmar had done, but are in fact closely linked with each other (p. 4). Nevertheless, Kabisch has perpetrated his own division of the book, seeking to delimit each type of eschatology to a separate source. Accordingly, he arrives at five separate sources coming from five different authors.³⁷ These were finally worked over by a redactor who was responsible for the book in approximately its present form. The sources are as follows: 1. Salathiel Apocalypse (S) consists of most of the first four visions (3:1-32, 35b; 4:1-51; 5:13b-6:10; 6:30-7:25; 7:45-8:62; 9:13-10:57; 12:40-48; 14:28-35). S was a pessimist and dualist who saw nothing good in this material world. His hope was in an other-worldly age to come. He wrote around A. D. 100. 2. Ezra Apocalypse (E) provided most of the balance of the first episodes in four separate passages (5:1-13; 6:13-28; 7:28-44; 8:63-9:8). E expected an earthly messianic era. He wrote about 30 B.C. 3. Eagle vision (A) is the source which provided the bulk of chapters 11-12. The author of A had a vivid hatred of Rome as a result of the destruction of

35. By contrast, Vaganay (p. 63) cites the opinion of Kautzsch (APAT I, p. xxi) that IV Ezra is the "sympathischsten und tiefsinnigsten" of the apocalypses.

36. Richard Kabisch, Das vierte Buch Ezra auf seine Quellen untersucht, Göttingen, 1889.

37. Kabisch seems not to have given a neat summary of his sources, but such

the temple. He wrote shortly after A. D. 90. 4. Son of man vision (M) provided the content of chapter 13. The author was not so anti-Roman as the author of A, thus probably wrote before A. D. 70, perhaps even in the pre-Pompey era. 5. A second Ezra source (E-2) provided the historical material for chapter 14. The author shared the eschatological outlook of S and wrote about the same time, i.e., A. D. 100. Finally, the redactor (R) put the pieces together around A. D. 120. R was attracted to S's discussion of theodicy-related questions, but was less enthusiastic about the eschatology of S, so he reworked S, using bits of E, and adding A and M to emphasize the this-worldly eschatology which R accepted, zealot as he was. Kabisch denies any integral relationship of the final chapter to the whole work, considering it as an historical postscript to the apocalyptic material (p. 119). German scholars rather quickly repudiated Kabisch's solution, but primarily through the influence of Box (q.v.) in APOT II, the source hypothesis still lingers in English-speaking circles. One of the more effective critiques of Kabisch has been offered by Keulers³⁸ who notes that if it was impossible for an author to construct a book of such disparate elements, the same should apply to the redactor. In other words, if the redactor was dissatisfied with the eschatology of S, why could not the author of S have felt the same dissatisfaction and thus be led to incorporate the messianic eschatology as well? In any case, for an over-all view of IV Ezra, one must resort to Kabisch's

is given by Joseph Keulers in Die eschatologische Lehre des vierten Esrabuches, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1922, pp. 41-42. Keulers erroneously gives Kabisch's date for the Eagle Vision as A. D. 50, rather than A. D. 90 (cf. Kabisch, p. 164). A summary is also given of Kabisch's sources by Myers, p. 119, though Myers errs in listing a section of Kabisch's "S" source as 8:45-62 instead of 7:45-8:62. BJ (pp. lxxxix-xc) also summarizes Kabisch's analysis.

38. Keulers, p. 52.

brief discussion of the redactor with which he concludes his work (pp. 173-176), though admittedly, much of value is contained in the discussion which precedes.

d. Gunkel (1900).³⁹ In spite of the relative brevity of Gunkel's remarks, his introduction to IV Ezra in *APAT II* is a classic, continuing to exert an influence on the interpretation of the book even today. He considers the book to be a reflection of the inner turmoil of an author who seeks to understand the reason for the problems of this life, and who struggles to find justification for the condemnation of the sinner in the day of judgment. Gunkel vividly details the experience of the author who finally comes to the place where he can grasp the hope of the age to come as the solution to Israel's problems. Having attained this plateau, however, he is plunged to greater depths as he realizes that so very few will actually be able to attain the future age (cf. 7:17). In other words, the answer to one question simply raises a deeper and more agonizing problem. In the end, it cannot be said that the author finds solutions--only answers (pp. 336-339). Several of Gunkel's observations relating to the form and content of the book are frequently cited and built upon by later interpreters. Most notable in this respect, are: 1. His description of the two types of problems dealt with in IV Ezra, namely, religious problems and speculations (I-III) and apocalyptic and eschatological mysteries (IV-VI);⁴⁰ 2. His observation of the transition that takes place at the end of episode III, marked by the command for Ezra to cease his fasting and eat flowers (9:23ff), thus symbolizing the transition from perplexity and sorrow to consolation.⁴¹ Gunkel offers no explanation

39. Gunkel, pp. 331-401.

40. Ibid., p. 335. Note the similarity to the earlier descriptions by Volkmar.

41. Ibid., pp. 348, 385. Again, though several scholars (e.g., Myers, p. 250)

as to how or why the transition takes place, but his description of the author's initial agony and subsequent consolation is superb.

e. Schiefer (1901).⁴² In a rather brief summary article of his full-length work, Schiefer has given a few hints of his method of approach to IV Ezra. He apparently considers the problem of sin to be the foremost one in the book and the agony which is evident therein is the author's own, thus he grants full weight to the Ezra speeches of I-III. Schiefer is quite interested in noting parallels and contrasts with Pauline theology, and in this connection he states that the problem which Paul and the author of IV Ezra faced was essentially the same, but there was a great difference in the two men, for "ein Paulus kommt von zerknirschender Sündenerkenntnis zum freudigen Bekenntnis seiner und der Menschheit Erlösung in Christo Jesu" (p. 323). Schiefer also accepts that the theory of original sin is expressed "klipp und klar" in IV Ezra (p. 323).

f. Vaganay (1906).⁴³ Vaganay's most interesting little book bears the mark of Gunkel's influence. Although he does not discuss the significance of the dialogue tension, Vaganay has given considerable attention to the structure of IV Ezra. He notes (p. 9) a 3 + 3 + 1 framework for the seven episodes. The first three episodes are connected with fasts, while at the beginning of the fourth Ezra is specifically instructed not to fast,

cite Gunkel for this observation, it had already been noted by Volkmar, p. 120.

42. F. W. Schiefer, "Das Problem der Sünde im 4. Ezrabuch," ZWTh 44 (1901), pp. 321-324. The article is apparently a summary of the author's more complete discussion which has been unavailable to the present writer: Die religiösen und ethischen Anschauungen des 4. Ezrabuches, Leipzig, 1901. See also "Sünde und Schuld in der Apokalypse des Baruch," ZWTh 45 (1902), pp. 327-339.

43. Léon Vaganay, op. cit.

but to eat flowers (Volkmar, Gunkel). The final episode lends authority to all the preceding episodes by apparently including IV Ezra among the seventy secret books which came into being as the result of the direction of the divine Spirit (Volkmar). Vaganay also notes two significant points of transition in the book: 7:15-16 and 9:13. He does not develop the latter one to any great extent, but 7:15-16 is pivotal for his entire study as the transition point between a concern for national salvation which is dominant in 3:1-7:14 and the concern for personal salvation which is dominant in 7:17-9:25.⁴⁴ When the author of IV Ezra is dealing with national salvation, he is both confident of the end and hopeful; but when he is dealing with personal salvation, though he is still confident that the end is near, he is far from hopeful. The tension between these two poles is indicative of the tension that the author himself is experiencing, and is not quite able to resolve. Because Vaganay does not fully recognize the significance of the dialogue format, he characterizes 7:17-9:25 as a section which brings nothing but condemnation to the wicked who have transgressed God's law (p. 10). This, of course, reflects only the opinion of Uriel. Vaganay (p. 11) then recalls an observation by Kabisch⁴⁵ that the last four episodes actually add nothing new to the eschatology of the book. Since the author has already dealt with both the national and personal aspects of eschatology, why does he carry on with these additional episodes? Vaganay thinks that it is because the author did not want to end on a dismal note, preferring to direct

44. Gunkel (pp. 337-338) had noted the same point of transition, but described it as a turning from present problems to a concern for the future.

45. Kabisch, p. 4.

the attention of the reader to the grandeurs awaiting the people of God.

The problems that Vaganay leaves unsolved are the tantalizing ones. He states that the author is certain of national salvation, but uncertain of personal salvation (p. 60). But this raises two questions: 1. Is the national hope this-worldly or other-worldly? 2. Why is it that in the final episode the author speaks almost exclusively of a personal hope after death to the exclusion of any messianic kingdom? Vaganay thinks that the author's solution is original in that he has transformed the national hope into a temporary messianic era which is a prelude to that eternal destiny which awaits all mankind. Whether or not this solution is original with IV Ezra is debatable,⁴⁶ and its cogency as a genuine solution is further weakened by virtue of the fact that it is only clearly suggested in episode III, while disappearing completely from episode VII which is the author's last word. Nevertheless, Vaganay has contributed some valuable insights into the interpretation of IV Ezra. His strengths lie in the fact that, while he has not explicitly recognized the significance of the dialogue tension, he has noted the psychological tension which is evident in the author's mind and is worked out between the national hope and its relationship to messianism on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the individual's hope for salvation and his relationship to the law. His weaknesses stem from his failure to give proper attention to dialogues IV and VII and to give proper weight to the differences between the this-worldly and the other-worldly types of eschatology.

g. Box (1912).⁴⁷ Both in his full-length commentary and in his

46. See Russell, pp. 291-297, who detects elements of a temporary messianic kingdom in I Enoch, Jubilees, II Enoch, and II Baruch, as well as in IV Ezra.

47. G. H. Box, op. cit., and in APOT II, pp. 542-624, which is a shortened edition of the full-length commentary.

discussion in APOT II, G. H. Box is hampered in his ability to discuss IV Ezra as a whole by his dependence on source criticism as a means of solving the problems of the book.⁴⁸ Thus he speaks of the theology of S, E, A, M, and E-2. The only redeeming factor is his discussion of the theology of the redactor (pp. liii-lvii). More recent scholars would simply call this redactor the author, and Box himself approaches that position when he states that the redactor was "something more" than just a compiler; R "impressed a certain unity on the book" and sought to "adjust the different elements to his own comprehensive scheme" (p. liii). It was this redactor who considered the religious problems of S to be the most significant aspect of the "book", and accordingly, placed S first. S deals with both the national hope and the personal hope, and sees the only answer for either lying in the age to come. R realized that this was an inadequate answer as far as orthodox theology was concerned, so he provided another in the form of A and M which he appended to S. Thus the latter part of the book is a return to what Box considers the older eschatology. Furthermore, Box believes that the special object of the redactor in "compiling" the book is revealed in chapter 14. There the apocalyptic literature is given more or less equal status with canonical literature, and the redactor thereby seeks to commend the apocalyptic literature to rabbinical circles (p. lviii). But for an explanation of the complaints of the early episodes, one has to return to Box's discussion of S, and here it would appear that he would accept S as a reflection of the

48. Box's source analysis is very similar to that of Kabisch, though Box assigns more to the redactor than does Kabisch. For an outline of Box's sources, see APOT II, p. 551, or pp. xxvi-xxvii in the 1912 commentary. Unless indicated otherwise, the references cited in the text are to the larger (1912) commentary. Myers (pp. 119-120) also gives an outline of Box's sources.

author's own personal dilemma, but Box has obscured the true tension in the book by finding the answers to Ezra's problems in the statements of Uriel. Thus, "the apocalyptist never wavers in his conviction that God's love for Israel exceeds all other, and finds in this thought a source of supreme consolation" (pp. xxxvif). For support, Box appeals to 5:31-40 (cf 8:47), the speeches of Uriel! Likewise, that the future age will solve all difficulties is a "fundamental conviction of our apocalyptist" (p. xxxvii), which is hardly the impression that the reader gets if he really is sensitive to the speeches of Ezra. Box's commentary is still the premier commentary in English on IV Ezra, and it is to be regretted that his penchant for source criticism has drawn him away from a really thorough consideration of the book as a whole.⁴⁹

h. Keulers (1922).⁵⁰ The primary purpose of Joseph Keulers book is to discuss the eschatology of IV Ezra rather than the issues involved with the religious questions it raises. But inasmuch as the eschatology of the book is supposed to supply the answers to the religious problems, both aspects receive considerable attention. Keulers states that the author's purpose in writing his book was to comfort the people after the destruction of Jerusalem (p. 13), and he recognizes that the early episodes (I-III) represent the

49. The Kabisch-Box style source criticism continues to exert considerable influence, at least in English-speaking circles, in spite of the fact that most serious students of the book now view the book as the work of an author rather than a redactor. Harnisch (pp. 13f) states that since Gunkel and Violet, it has been almost universally accepted that the book is a unity. Breech (op. cit., p. 267) attributes much of the blame to the continued use of APOT II, in which Box's theory is not limited to the introduction, but is worked into the actual layout of the printed text. As late as 1962, Nigel Turner continued to perpetrate the source hypothesis in his IDB article, "Esdras, Books of" (IDB II, pp. 140-142).

50. Joseph Keulers, op. cit.

the internal struggles of the author (p. 23). In a brief preface, Keulers refers to Vaganay's earlier discussion of the eschatology of IV Ezra, but interestingly enough, there is virtually no discussion of Vaganay's position in the course of Keuler's presentation. Whereas Vaganay had divided the first three episodes at 7:15-16, arguing that initially there is concern for national salvation which then shifts to a concern for individual salvation, Keulers envisages episodes I-III as dealing with a universal, other-worldly eschatology (except for 6:25-28; 7:26-29; 9:7-8), with episodes IV-VI presenting a national, this-worldly eschatology (pp. 36-37). He is fully aware of the problems connected with any attempt to separate the two types of eschatology,⁵¹ though his own approach is based on the assumption that only by separating the two types can the problems of the book be resolved. Although Keulers very neatly outlines the diverse eschatological elements contained in the book, he leaves unsolved the crucial question: what, after all, is the author's eschatological solution to the religious problems which he faces? Keulers should perhaps not be faulted too heavily for failing to resolve a problem which may after all be insoluble, but his methodology can be questioned, for, if one is primarily concerned with episodes I-VI, then a plausible argument can be made for Keulers' hypothesis that the author has somehow managed to unite the two types of eschatology into a single scheme in which the messianic era assumes the function of a limited intermediate period between this present evil age and the universal

51. As Keulers states on p. 46: "So weiss man oft nicht, ob von Israel oder von den Menschen die Rede ist, ob er von physischen oder moralischen Übeln, von den Gerechten im allgemeinen oder von den gerechten Juden, von den Gottlosen oder von den Feinden Israels, vom messianischen Reiche oder von der seligen Ewigkeit spricht."

age to come. But this hypothesis appears less convincing when one gives full weight to the dialogue tension in III (i.e., Ezra's complaints), and to the author's last word in episode VII. Keulers ignores the former aspect and gives little attention to the latter. So for all his valuable discussion of the individual aspects of eschatology in IV Ezra, he provides little direct assistance in linking the eschatological answer of the book to the author's personal turmoil.

i. Violet II (1924).⁵² Bruno Violet is undoubtedly the prince of IV Ezra scholars. His two monumental works are indispensable for the serious study of the book. In discussing the purpose of IV Ezra, he states that it was written by a man who "nicht schreiben wollte, sondern schreiben musste" (p. XXXIX). Therein lies the attraction of the book. The author is struggling with the reality of sin and the fact of destruction as he seeks to understand God's will for the world and his own people. Everything in the book is subordinated to the author's concern with the problem of evil--a problem with which he struggles to the very end (p. XL). So while Violet does not specify the dialogue-form as the key to the understanding of the book, his summary of the book's purpose shows that he fully comprehends its significance. Violet has also given full weight to the form of the book in recognizing its division into seven episodes. In fact, he (unfortunately) recasts the entire verse and chapter numbering system into a new scheme based on this division. In addition, he finds internal evidence of the author's organization in 14:8ff where the signs are said to refer to episodes I-III

52. Of the two volumes already cited by Bruno Violet, the commentary (Violet II) is the more significant one for the purposes of the present historical survey and is the one referred to in the text above.

the dreams to episodes IV-VI, with the instruction to exhort the people and write the books forming the capstone as episode VII (p. XLI). In view of Violet's primary concern with textual matters, he has shown a remarkable sensitivity to the meaning of the book with a commendable linking of form and content. Violet apparently does not really find a "solution" to the author's problem in the book itself, since the problem is "nicht losbar" for a Jew (p. XL). The closest thing to an answer is the author's last word when he virtually admits that only the individual (not the nation) can be sure of God's grace (ibid.)

j. Mundle (1929).⁵³ Wilhelm Mundle has dealt with the "religious" problem in IV Ezra. He seeks to establish the essential Jewishness of the author especially with reference to his attitudes towards sin and the law. At one point, Mundle speaks specifically of the problems posed by the dialogue format (p. 235), warning against the too-ready acceptance of the speeches of Ezra as containing the author's real point of view; the author's position can only be determined from both sides of the dialogue, though it must be recognized that it is the angel's position which predominates in the end (p. 236). While his evaluation seems to be correct, to implement it even-handedly in the actual interpretation of the book is much more difficult. Thus in the introductory section (pp. 222-235) when Mundle is dealing with the general characteristics evident in IV Ezra, he virtually ignores the dialogue tension, with the result that the viewpoint of Uriel is the pre-dominant one. Even after recognizing the problems posed by the dialogue, Mundle gives much more weight to Uriel's arguments than to Ezra's. For

53. Wilhelm Mundle, "Das religiöse Problem des IV. Esrabuches," ZAW 47 (1929), pp. 222-49.

example, he can speak of the satisfying solution which the author finds in the hope provided by the age to come (p. 242); likewise, when Ezra classes himself among the sinners, Mundle considers this to be simply a literary device, and not a true reflection of the author's turmoil (p. 246). Mundle quite properly considers both the speeches of Ezra and Uriel to be representative of acceptable Jewish teaching, and he also gives proper weight to the final episode as the author's last word, but he gives no attention to the over-all organization of the book into seven episodes, or to the transition which takes place between the two halves of the book. In actual practice, then, Mundle has not adequately recognized the importance of literary form in IV Ezra, for, on the one hand, he does not really give full weight to the tension which is evident in the dialogue, though he gives lip service to it, and, on the other hand, he has failed to take account of the organization and movement of the book as a whole.

k. Montefiore (1929).⁵⁴ The title of the little book by C. G. Montefiore is actually rather misleading. Though it is billed as IV Ezra—A Study in the Development of Universalism, the author admits that IV Ezra is really only his point of departure for a general discussion of the development of universalism within Christianity and Judaism (p. 11). Nevertheless, given Montefiore's scholarly credentials, his understanding of the meaning of IV Ezra is significant and deserves at least brief mention here. He interprets the book as the outgrowth of the author's own internal struggle, thus: "The writer hates, and rebels against, the doctrine which he feels

54. C. G. Montefiore, IV Ezra: A Study in the Development of Universalism, London, 1929.

obliged to teach" (p. 13). The author's agony is intense for he believes that the doctrine that only a few will be saved is part of the divine revelation and therefore must not be doubted, yet doubt it he does and he sees its "hatefulness, its pitilessness, its injustice. The doubts and complaints he puts into his own mouth; the orthodox doctrine into the mouth of an angel" (p. 14). Montefiore depicts the author as a "tender-hearted Jew... who was stricken with pity for the awful pathos and tragedy of the lot of man" (p. 15). Much the same understanding of IV Ezra is apparent in an introduction to Montefiore's study provided by G. R. S. Mead.⁵⁵ Thus, while detailed substantiation is lacking, Montefiore's opinion can at least be cited in support of that interpretation which sees IV Ezra as a reflection of the author's personal turmoil.

1. Oesterley (1933).⁵⁶ The Westminster Commentary on II Esdras by W. O. E. Oesterley would appear to be the last major attempt by a recognized scholar to explain the book on the basis of source criticism. To be sure, Oesterley has parted company with Kabisch and Box by viewing chapters 3-10 as an essential unity, but episodes V-VII are each considered to be separate sources. Interestingly enough, though Oesterley has reduced the role played by the redactor, especially in chapters 3-10, he appears to have

55. A quotation from Mead's foreward is of interest: "It (IV Ezra) is a courageously expressed and well-argued plea for mercy on the multitude against the apocalyptic orthodoxy of the day, which insisted on the miserable dogma that few, very few, could be saved. Reading it today, our sympathies are, must be, with that large-hearted and gallant old Jew of eighteen centuries or more ago. We feel with him, think with him, cheer him on; and at the end profoundly regret that he found himself compelled to bow down his brave spirit under the weight of tradition, that he had to put this final relentless judgment in the mouth of the "Angel of the Lord", and accept the reproof--can it possibly be ironical?--'Dost thou love the creation more than I?'" (*ibid.* pp. 9-10).

56. W. O. E. Oesterley, II Esdras (Westminster Commentaries), London, 1933.

isolated episodes V-VII even more than Box has done. Thus in the introductory section which deals with the "Teaching of the Book" (pp. xix-xxxvii), he has tacitly limited his discussion to chapters 3-10, touching on the balance of the book only in a brief section entitled "The Eschatology of the other parts of the Book" (p. xxxvii). Although there is an attempt to date each of the component parts of the book (pp. xlii-xlv), there is virtually no attempt to speak of the theology of the redactor, or to explain possible reasons for the addition of the last episodes, or to consider the possible meaning of the whole book with its transition from doubt to tranquility. When Oesterley does speak of the attitudes and purpose of the author, he is referring only to 3-10, and there he finds the struggles of an "isolated remnant" of the Apocalyptists who is mystified by the ways of God, but who still stands firm in his faith (p. xxiii). Oesterley would see IV Ezra (3-10) as the reflection of the author's struggles, but since he fragments the balance of the book, Oesterley must find the author's "answers" primarily in Uriel's speeches, which hardly does justice to the book as a whole. Thus, the author simply resigns himself to the fact that God's ways are past finding out and that his own understanding is woefully inadequate; finally he consoles himself with the thought that the new age will soon dawn. It is significant that because Box has so thoroughly fragmented IV Ezra, he needs a redactor of considerable skill in order to put the pieces together, and he can speak of the redactor impressing "a certain unity on the book".⁵⁷ But Oesterley, while commendably reducing the role of the redactor, has

57. Box, p. liii; APOT II, p. 558.

simply left the book as a collection of miscellaneous pieces which really have very little relationship to each other. In this respect Oesterley is the further from really understanding the book as a whole.

m. Volz (1934).⁵⁸ Brief mention should be made here of Paul Volz' comments on IV Ezra in his standard work on Jewish eschatology. He notes how the author of IV Ezra has sought to incorporate elements of both the older national eschatology and the newer, more universalistic personal eschatology. The older eschatology was used to counter the problem of national distress, but the problem of individual salvation required the use of the two-age eschatology (p. 36). While admitting that the author has thoroughly mixed his traditions, Volz nevertheless (correctly) outlines the bulk of the book's contents into two categories: 3:1-7:16; 10-13 deal with the national problem, while 7:17-9:22 deals with the problem of the individual. This of course, leaves the final chapter unaccounted for, and here Volz notes the suggestion of Kabisch and Violet that the individualizing verse 14:35 is a later addition (p. 37).⁵⁹ Volz thinks that the "solution" provided by the messianic idea has lost its vitality for the author who has accordingly reduced the messianic era to a temporary era and permits the Messiah to die (p. 36). What Volz does not say at this

58. Paul Volz, Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter, Tübingen, 1934, pp. 35-40, 112-113. This is a second edition of the earlier Jüdische Eschatologie von Daniel bis Akiba, Tübingen, 1903. References in the text are to Volz, 1934.

59. Volz apparently leaves undecided the question of whether chapter 14 supports the idea of national or personal salvation, but he does point to other passages such as 9:14-22 and 7:37 which go against the dominant tradition (i.e., national or personal) in which they are found (ibid., p. 37).

point is that Ezra reacts quite bitterly against the two-age theory which is propounded chiefly by the angelic messenger. A greater awareness of the dialogue format would have suggested that Ezra is not keen on either solution! In another connection, however (pp. 112-113), Volz admits that the author of IV Ezra was probably incapable of overcoming his doubt. While Volz does not specifically make use of the episode or dialogue terminology, he is quite aware of the problems which the form poses for the interpretation of the book. To the question as to why the author classes Ezra with the sinners, and then with the righteous (8:48ff), Volz responds that though the "fictitious" Ezra on occasion is classed with the righteous (by Uriel!), the author himself speaks through the complaints of Ezra (p. 113). Volz implies that the author intended to speak of bliss for the righteous in the end, but was only partially successful, because his doubts were so forcefully presented in the first part of the book (ibid.).

n. Gry (1938).⁶⁰ Only brief mention will be made here of the voluminous commentary of Léon Gry. While criticizing the results of the principal source critics (pp. XCIV-XCVI), he has embarked on a unique course of his own, replete with suggested emendations and rearrangement of the text. He characterizes as "malheureuse", Gunkel's view that the book is the reflection of a man torn by mental anguish; such a man could not produce a book with the intricate characteristics of IV Ezra (pp. XCVI-XCVII). He confirms the observations of Volkmar and Le Hir that the organization of the book into seven episodes is deliberate and is a witness to the integrity of the book (p. XCVII). As for the contrast between the two sections, he is rather

60. Léon Gry, op. cit.

noncommittal, simply stating a preference for the description of Le Hir (leçons orales/tableaux emblématiques) to that of Volkmar (Theodizee/Zukunftoffenbarung [sic]) (p. XCVIII). Unfortunately, Gry's own methodology tends to nullify the value of the considerable talent that has gone into the production of his commentary.⁶¹

o. Klausner (1956).⁶² As one might expect, Joseph Klausner's discussion of IV Ezra is predominantly interested in the messianic ideas which the book contains. Initially, Klausner remarks on the "lofty spirituality" of the book, which he considers to be the most exalted of all the books of the pseudepigrapha. "Its author excels in the purity of his idealism, in the loftiness of his visions, in his penetrating and deeply probing doubts about divine Providence...." (p. 349). Klausner describes both IV Ezra and II Baruch as "Books of Lamentation"⁶³ and the messianic ideas which they contain are intended as the divine consolation which

61. For a review of Gry, see J. A. Montgomery, op. cit.

62. Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel from Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah, trans. by W. F. Stinespring from the third Hebrew edition, London, 1956. The section which deals specifically with IV Ezra is found on pp. 349-365. According to Klausner's preface to the Second Edition (p. ix of the 1956 edition), it was part of a section originally published in 1921 in Jerusalem. The section dealing with the messianic idea in the time of the Tannaim (pp. 388-531) also referred to in the above text, was actually Klausner's doctoral dissertation at the University of Heidelberg, completed in 1902. It was published as Die messianischen Vorstellungen des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter der Tannaiten, Berlin, 1904.

63. On this theme, Klausner refers to another work of his (in Hebrew): History of the Second Temple, V, pp. 294-295.

follows affliction (p. 350). But while characterizing the book as an attempt at national consolation, Klausner ignores both the dialogue format⁶⁴ and the contrast between the two halves of the book. Elsewhere, he insists that one must clearly distinguish between the ideas of the Messianic Age and eschatological ideas (pp. 418-419); the proper sequence, according to Klausner, is Messianic Age followed by the Age to Come. The former is this-worldly, while the latter is other-worldly and deals with final rewards (p. 414). Although Klausner admits that the phrase "Age to Come" frequently refers to the "Messianic Age" (p. 408), he apparently deals with IV Ezra with the underlying assumption that there is a clear and uniform distinction between the two. As a result, Klausner glosses over a number of difficulties and apparent inconsistencies which appear in the messianic and eschatological ideas of the book. Most regrettably, since Klausner ignores the transition which occurs in the book, he provides no direct assistance in determining what the author's hopes for the future really were.

p. Harnisch (1969).⁶⁵ Wolfgang Harnisch has followed the lead of Brandenburger⁶⁶ in interpreting the purpose of the author of IV Ezra in

64. Interestingly enough, Klausner adds a footnote (p. 349) referring to the "excellent introduction" to IV Ezra by Gunkel, but he does not follow through on Gunkel's presentation of the author's internal struggles.

65. Wolfgang Harnisch, op. cit.

66. The basic hypothesis from which Harnisch operates was suggested earlier by Egon Brandenburger, op. cit., pp. 27-36. Brandenburger suggests that the voice of Ezra represents "ein ganzes Seinsverständnis" (ibid., p. 30), which the author opposes through the speeches of the angel. Harnisch has picked up this suggestion, using it as one of the guiding hypotheses of his study, and carrying it somewhat further by suggesting that the viewpoint which the author opposes is actually that of a skeptical party (see Harnisch, p. 64).

terms of polemic against a skeptical, gnosticizing heresy which arose after A. D. 70. Ezra is said to represent the heretical point of view, while Uriel represents the author's real point of view which eventually triumphs. Thus, in building on the suggestion of Brandenburger, Harnisch has brought the dialogue format into real prominence. But Harnisch has not given proper weight to the over-all structure of the book as a necessary preliminary to the study of its content. He has given most of his attention to episodes I-III. Except for the initial prayer in IV (9:26-37) and a short discussion of the eagle vision (episode V), the discussion of the last four episodes is, for the most part, relegated to occasional references in the notes. This is not entirely unjustified inasmuch as the more interesting, if not the more significant, material from the theological point of view is undoubtedly contained in I-III. Nevertheless, two of Harnisch's positions would appear to require that greater attention be paid to the over-all structure and to the content of all seven episodes. First, if the voice of Ezra represents a heretical point of view which is gradually overcome by the author's true convictions which are placed in the mouth of Uriel (cf. p. 173), then the role of the dialogue partners needs to be established on the basis of the whole book. Second, if the two-age theory is as dominant in IV Ezra as Harnisch contends,⁶⁷ more attention needs to be paid to harmonizing this point of view with the other rather disparate eschatological elements which occur throughout the book, and particularly in IV-VII

67. The first main section of Harnisch's work (pp. 89-247) deals with the two-age teaching.

after Ezra has supposedly capitulated to the angel's point of view.

Harnisch has contributed a wealth of material for the study of IV Ezra, but his over-all interpretation is weakened by the fact that he appears to be operating from unproven assumptions. By characterizing IV Ezra as polemic, he has run the risk of being largely insensitive to the great pathos of the Ezra speeches in episode III. In fact, he is forced to admit that the position which Ezra espouses is one to which the author himself feels quite attracted (p. 67, note 2), which is tantamount to admitting that the book is not, after all, a piece of polemic but a reflection of the author's own mental turmoil. Furthermore, when Harnisch compares the content of IV Ezra and II Baruch, because he has accepted the voice of "God" as determinative for both books, he concludes that the author of IV Ezra is interested primarily in the Jewish nation, while the author of II Baruch is more concerned about the individual (p. 80). In actual fact, one cannot neatly distinguish between national and personal problems in Judaism, but even if one were to speak simply in terms of "tendencies", just the reverse of Harnisch's conclusions would appear to be true if one gives proper weight to the dialogue form in both books.⁶⁸

68. As a footnote to Harnisch, mention should be made of one of the works with which Harnisch occasionally takes issue: Dietrich Rössler, Gesetz und Geschichte. Untersuchungen zur Theologie der jüdischen Apokalyptik und der pharisäischen Orthodoxie (WMANT 3), Neukirchen, 1960. Rössler is seeking to distinguish between the apocalyptists and the orthodox pharisees with reference to several theological points, and in this connection includes an excursus on the "Special Problem of the Law in IV Ezra" (pp. 106-109). In the excursus, he recognizes the significance of the dialogue tension and the differing points of view, but remarkably, he has Ezra supporting pharisaic dogma (universality of sin) and Uriel as the proponent of the apocalyptic theology (pp. 108-109). See Harnisch's critique of Rössler in Harnisch, pp. 66-67.

q. Stone (1971).⁶⁹ Although Michael Stone's contribution to the study of the Armenian text of IV Ezra has already been mentioned, he has also done some work on the eschatology of the book, though very little of it is readily available.⁷⁰ In Encyclopaedia Judaica, however, his article on the Ezra Apocalypse contains a suggestion as to how he would interpret the book as a whole. After recognizing the nature of Ezra's theodicy-problems and the attempted answers by Uriel, Stone suggests that "the author's real answer is to be sought elsewhere, in the eschatological sections which conclude each of these visions, and in the three eschatological occurrences themselves" (col. 1109). Stone does not elaborate further, but elsewhere he has stated that, apparently, "the Messiah was not the answer to the questions that Ezra was asking."⁷¹ Further published information from Stone would be helpful, since it is in the area of eschatology that a progression and transition is most difficult to establish in IV Ezra.

r. Breech (1973).⁷² In a short, but highly instructive article, Earl Breech has given full weight to the significance of the relationship between

69. M. E. Stone, "Ezra, Apocalypse of," Encyclopaedia Judaica, eds. Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder, VI, Jerusalem, 1971, cols. 1108-1109.

70. Stone's 1965 Harvard dissertation (cited by Breech, op. cit., p. 267) is entitled Features of the Eschatology of IV Ezra, but the present writer has been unable to obtain access to it. Stone does, however, deal with some of the eschatological aspects of IV Ezra in "The Concept of the Messiah in IV Ezra," Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, ed. J. Neusner (Studies in the History of Religions, 14), Leiden, 1968, pp. 295-312. Though not indicated as such, the article may be a part of Stone's Harvard dissertation, or a resumé of it. It might also be noted that Stone has been commissioned to write the commentary on IV Ezra in the new "Hermeneia" series (Fortress Press, USA). See Fortress Press Books, Fall 1973 (catalogue), Philadelphia, 1973, p. 25.

71. Stone, "Concept of the Messiah," p. 312.

72. Earl Breech, op. cit.

structure and meaning in IV Ezra. He notes that even when attention has been given to the form of the book, results have not been satisfactory.⁷³ Breech's solution entails viewing the whole of the apocalypse as an attempt by the author to lead the post-A. D. 70 Jewish community from despair to consolation, and this is accomplished by means of the narrative which details Ezra's movement from distress to consolation (p. 269). Noting Gunkel's earlier reference to the progression which takes place from the first three episodes to the balance of the book, Breech describes this initial group of three episodes as a triptych (p. 270), each panel of which is organized in exactly the same manner: First, there is a brief description of Ezra's distress (3:1-3//5:21-22//6:35-37). Then there follows the seer's complaint (3:4-36//5:25-30//6:38-59). After this complaint, a vigorous dialogue takes place between Uriel and Ezra (4:1-5:13//5:31-6:28//7:1-9:22). Breech notes that none of the dialogues is conclusive; Ezra is not satisfied with the Angel's replies and does not accede to Uriel's arguments, but each episode ends with Ezra asking for and receiving the signs of the end-time (4:51-5:13//6:11-28//8:63-9:22) and even this does not console him (cf. 9:14-16!). After each panel of the triptych, a narrative section moves the action forward while keeping it rooted in the concrete situation of Ezra's room (5:14-20//6:29-35//9:23-26). The turning point in Ezra's consolation is marked by the change of location to the field and the cessation of Ezra's fasting (Volkmar, Gunkel). Episode IV demonstrates Ezra's sincere grief over Zion, which provides the "rationale"

73. Breech (*ibid.*, pp. 268f) cites the views of Box (APOT II, pp. 542, 558), R. H. Pfeiffer (History of New Testament Times with an Introduction to the Apocrypha, New York, 1949, p. 85), and Harnisch (p. 64). The views of Box and Harnisch have already been given above, and Pfeiffer simply sees the final visions as an indication that the author "sought comfort in the world of make-believe" (Pfeiffer, loc. cit.).

for the Most High's granting of the consolation visions which follow in V and VI (p. 272). Breech considers these episodes also to be carefully organized (pp. 272f) with each consisting of a dream vision (11:1-12:3//13:1-13), Ezra's personal response (12:3-9//13:13-24), and the angelic interpretation (12:10-35//13:20-53), concluding with a narrative section "which keeps everything rooted in the concrete situation of the book (12:36-51//13:53-58)" (p. 273). The final episode forms an esthetic conclusion (Gunkel) to the whole as Ezra mediates the divine truth to the community (p. 274).

That which determines the form of the book, according to Breech, is "its function as an act of invocation, referral, and waiting" (p. 270), a pattern which he detects in some of the communal laments (e.g., Pss. 12, 60, 85). Although this aspect would appear to be the essential catalyst for Breech's article, it is, in a sense, his most vulnerable point, and that for two reasons. First, while there is definitely a transition from distress to consolation, the element of skepticism in episodes I-III would seem to be too acute to permit IV Ezra to be used effectively as a means of consoling the community. Second, the effectiveness of the pattern noted by Breech in the Psalms would appear to be linked closely with cultic ritual and as such would require a much more compact presentation than is found in IV Ezra. The length of IV Ezra and the intricacies of the dialogue arguments would require rather careful and perhaps protracted study before a tenuous consolation could be assured. In this respect, II Baruch would probably fit Breech's prescription more effectively, for it moves rather more quickly into the consolation pattern; furthermore, by comparison with IV Ezra, its skepticism is both superficial and short-lived. Breech has perhaps underestimated the skeptical element in IV Ezra, just as Harnisch

has overestimated it. But whatever failings there may be in Breech's study, they cannot detract from the considerable contribution he has made to the study of IV Ezra by focusing on the close relationship between form and function as the means of understanding the book.

s. Hayman (1974).⁷⁴ Peter Hayman's study is a more-or-less direct response to the work of Harnisch. In the course of his discussion, Hayman notes the various attempts that have been made to explain the sharp contrast between the two parts of the Ezra Apocalypse. For example, the source critics attempted to resolve the difficulty by assigning the contrasting parts to different sources. Gunkel and others have suggested that the book is a reflection of the author's internal struggles, with Ezra representing the author's own doubts. More recently, this interpretation has been reversed by the Brandenburger-Harnisch hypothesis that the author's own views are from the mouth of Uriel, while Ezra is considered as the spokesman for a gnosticizing heresy which the author opposes. It is this last position which Hayman takes up and refutes carefully and effectively. One of the more enlightening arguments which Hayman uses is his suggestion that the views expressed by Ezra are neither gnostic nor heretical, but belong firmly within the OT and Jewish tradition. Not only can this be demonstrated from the obvious places such as Job and Ecclesiastes, but from the Psalms and the prophets as well.⁷⁵

74. Peter Hayman, "The Problem of Pseudonymity in the Ezra Apocalypse," paper read at the Winter, 1973-74, meeting of the British Society for Old Testament Study, and forthcoming in the Journal for the Study of Judaism.

75. In this connection, Hayman (*ibid.*) refers to an article by R. Davidson, "Some Aspects of the Theological Significance of Doubt in the Old Testament," Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute 7 (1968-1969), pp. 41-52.

In the end, Hayman, with some modifications, largely agrees with Gunkel's observation that the book is illustrative of the author's inner turmoil. And what is more, in the light of Jewish history, the way the author has solved his problem is really not so unusual after all; IV Ezra is simply another example of how "overwhelming religious experience can dissolve any kind of intellectual doubt".⁷⁶

t. Myers (1974).⁷⁷ Myers' discussion of the purpose of IV Ezra is somewhat disappointing in that he gives virtually no consideration to the dialogue form of the book and the relationship of the structure to the content. In the whole of his introductory material (pp. 107-134), he does not once mention the significance of the dialogue form and the tension between Ezra and Uriel as a means of understanding the message of the book. In the body of his commentary, however, he does show some awareness of the problems raised by the structure of the book, though he does not deal with the question in an organized manner. On p. 232, he cites Gunkel's observation that at 7:16 the author has shifted from concern about the present to concern about the future. Likewise, on p. 241, he again refers to Gunkel who had noted that Ezra approaches life from the standpoint of the sinner, while Uriel looks at it from the viewpoint of the saved. On p. 277, there seems to be a vestige of the work done by Brandenburger and Harnisch when Myers states that Ezra at times serves as the advocatus diaboli, but as the book progresses, he tends to lean progressively towards the interpreting

76. Hayman, op. cit., final paragraph.

77. Myers, op. cit.

angel's point of view. Earlier (p. 126), Myers had noted the division of content suggested by Gunkel and accepted by Keulers, namely, that episodes I-III deal with eschatology-related religious problems while IV-VII deal with apocalyptic and eschatological mysteries. Nevertheless, Myers states at one point that the Eagle Vision (episode V) represents the climax of the book (p. 184), so he would apparently not be inclined toward the view that episode IV serves as a transition between the two types of material found in the apocalypse.⁷⁸ In spite of the fact that Myers overlooks the significance of the structure of IV Ezra, he does recognize the two major problems with which the author is struggling, namely, the status of the people of God and the problem of evil as it affects the individual's hope for salvation. He reflects Rosenthal's preference for the dominance of the national problem in the author's scheme when he states that "II Esdras offers a Jewish interpretation of the times" (p. 130). The author of the apocalypse believed the end of the age to be very near; soon the Messianic Age would begin. But on balance, Myers seems to prefer the interpretation of Violet⁷⁹ that everything in the book is subordinated to the problem of evil, or more specifically, the problem of the evil heart (pp. 130f). Myers also implies that the author did not have a firm hope in a national solution: "Only the individual could be sure of the special pardon of God" (p. 131). In short, Myers has contributed very little by way of new insights into the study of IV Ezra, but he has managed to glean a few nuggets from the efforts of previous scholars.

78. On p. 251, however, Myers does refer to the progression that takes place through the first three episodes, and on p. 250, he also notes the significance of Ezra's turning from his fasting to eat flowers.

79. Violet II, p. XL.

u. Summary: the Roots of the Present Study. As a means of summarizing the preceding survey of IV Ezra research, perhaps it would be permissible simply to note in particular those scholars who have contributed most directly to the present study. Three aspects are of significance: i. The use of the seven-episode structure; ii. The function of the dialogue format; iii. The author's purpose in writing.

i. Seven-episode Structure.

Volkmar and Gunkel still remain of primary importance in their observations on the over-all structure of the book. Both scholars, though using slightly different terminology, outline a 3 + 4 basic scheme, though a 3 + 3 + 1 would probably be just as accurate in view of the special function which the final episode is seen to perform. As will be seen by what follows, a 3 + 1 + 3 scheme is adopted here, which, in reality is simply a variant on the 3 + 4 scheme in that it gives greater emphasis to the fourth episode as the transitional episode. More recently, Breech's constructive suggestions about the consolation pattern which is evident both in the book as a whole, and within its several parts, has proved to be an important stimulus for the present study.

ii. Dialogue Format.

Gunkel's description of the book as a reflection of the author's inner struggle still seems to be one of the most perceptive descriptions of the book. Though the distinctive roles of the dialogue partners are not explicitly developed by Gunkel, he nevertheless demonstrates that he is fully aware of the dialogue tension. Brandenburger and Harnisch, in spite of their

unfortunate basic hypothesis, can be credited with bringing the dialogue format into the prominence which is reflected in the main body of the present study.

iii. Purpose of the Book.

It is in the area of the purpose of the book that it is most difficult to analyze the antecedents of the present study. There is a broad spectrum of opinion between two poles, with each scholar's opinion dependent, to a large extent, on how much weight he grants the Uriel or Ezra speeches. Probably the harshest view of those surveyed above, is that of Rosenthal, who depicts the author as a rabid hater of Rome who was whipping up the feelings of the people in preparation for the demise of Rome and for the dawn of the age to come. At the other end of the spectrum are such men as Gunkel, Violet, and Montefiore, who give much more weight to the problems reflected in the Ezra speeches, and thus imply that Ezra (i.e., the author) can console his people only with considerable difficulty. The final episodes definitely indicate some sort of consolation, but to what extent this guarded optimism of the final episodes is able to outweigh the laments of the first three episodes is debatable. On balance, then, Gunkel's position seems nearer the truth. In other words, the author is in so much turmoil, that his consolation at the end is not really as convincing as it could be.

Now, in order to complete the historical survey of the relevant aspects of IV Ezra research, several items of an introductory nature may be dealt with topically. The sources mentioned above are drawn upon in an attempt to give a brief survey of opinion.

2. History of Research: Introductory Mattersa. Unity, Authorship, Relationship with Rabbinic Schools

The prevailing view of IV Ezra is that it constitutes a unity from the hand of an author who may very well have made use of existing oral and/or written traditions, but who nevertheless produced a book which was his own and bore the impress of his own personality. Kabisch (1889), and Box (1912) (who essentially reproduces Kabisch's scheme), have been the primary proponents of a multiple authorship, but their proposals have been by and large rejected by most interpreters of the book.⁸⁰

It is generally agreed that the author was a rather well-qualified scribe. He was one of the last of the apocalyptists and a lover of the law, but how close he was to the dominant pharisaic tradition of the post-A. D. 70 era is not agreed.⁸¹ Rosenthal suggested close links with Eliezer b. Hyrkanos;⁸² Vaganay noted some parallels with the views of Johanan b. Zakkai and Gamaliel II;⁸³ and Violet suggested rather tentatively that IV Ezra showed some affinities with the School of Akiba.⁸⁴ Box and Kohler both mentioned Shammaite

80. One of the more colorful statements rejecting the source hypothesis is given by M. R. James ("Salathiel qui et Esdras," JTS 19 (1918), p. 349) and cited with approval by Violet II (p. XLIII): "The Apocalypse of Salathiel, the centre of all the theories of dissection, is a ghost-book: conjured up by Kabisch in 1889, it has hovered about us long enough. I never liked the look of it, and I earnestly hope that it may now be permitted to vanish."

81. Oesterley (p. xxiii) states that the author was "despised by the Law-loving Pharisees, yet he glories in the Law...." Mundle (*op. cit.*, p. 223) states that it is the pharisaic mode of thought which dominates the book.

82. Rosenthal, pp. 60ff.

83. Vaganay, p. 26.

84. Violet II, p. L.

tendencies.⁸⁵ It would appear that the type of rabbinic teaching that one detects in IV Ezra is more or less directly related to the extent to which one prefers the Uriel or the Ezra speeches as containing the author's dominant interest. Those scholars who tend to ignore the dialogue tension or who take Uriel's point of view as determinative, consider the book to be more legalistic and less universalistic. Those who take the Ezra speeches as predominant tend to envisage a much more humane attitude as typifying the spirit of the book.

b. Time and Place of Composition

The vast majority of interpreters of IV Ezra accept a date close to the end of the first century A. D. This has been deduced both from the interpretation of the Eagle Vision in chapters 11 and 12 as well as from the "thirty years" mentioned in 3:1.⁸⁶ The source critics trace some of the material back to the last century B. C.,⁸⁷ and some interpreters, on the

85. Box, p. lxiii-lxv; Kaufmann Kohler, "Esdras, Books of," The Jewish Encyclopedia, ed. by Isidore Singer, V, New York and London, 1901, p. 222.

86. Opinion is divided as to whether the "thirtieth year after the destruction of the city" in 3:1 should be used for dating the book. Gunkel, p. 352, thinks that it is an approximate date, but Vaganay, p. 15, thinks it is merely an imitation of Ezekiel 1:1. Virtually all attempts at dating seek to deal with the Eagle Vision and with varying results. For a review of the various opinions, see Myers, pp. 299-302. Myers' rather cautious assessment is that the eagle most probably represents Rome and the three heads represent the three Flavian emperors, thus pointing to a date in the late first century. The remaining details Myers thinks are too imprecise to enable exact identification (p. 301).

87. At least Kabisch suggests a "vorpompeischen" era for his source M (op. cit., p. 166). Box suggests only a pre-A. D. 70 date for M (pp. xxxif). Kaminka even pushes the date back to 556 B. C. for the bulk of 3-10 and part of 12 and 14 (MGWJ 77 [1933], p. 351).

basis of the Eagle Vision, place the final recension of the book as late as A. D. 217.⁸⁸

As for the place of composition, two suggestions present themselves: Rome⁸⁹ and Palestine.⁹⁰ If it was intended for diaspora Jews, the Roman provenance would seem more likely, but if it was intended for Palestinian Jews as the author's preoccupation with the plight of the city and the temple suggests, then a Palestinian origin would seem likely.

This completes the historical survey of IV Ezra research. It may be noted, however, that the following chapter, while dealing more directly with the content of IV Ezra, will continue the discussion of the aspects of IV Ezra that have been of primary concern in the above survey, namely, the consideration of form and structure (i.e., the seven-episode scheme and the dialogue format) as an important key in understanding the meaning and purpose of the book.

88. Vaganay, p. 18, notes that Le Hir (*Études bibliques*, I. p. 173-208) thought the vision took the history of the Roman empire to A. D. 217 to the times of Macrinus and his son Diadumenianus. Gutschmid (*Kleine Schriften*, II, Leipzig, 1890, pp. 240-258) accepted the same view but he thought the vision was a later interpolation into the book. Vaganay (pp. 15-23) accepts this late date, but on the basis of a later reworking of the vision.

89. On the basis of the reference to Babylon, especially in 3:1, some scholars have suggested that Rome was the place of writing; for example: Volkmar (p. 368), Violet II (p. L), Keulers (p. 108).

90. On the basis of the hypothesis that the original language was Hebrew, Gunkel stated a preference for an origin from an eastern provenance (p. 352). Rosenthal opted for Palestine because only there could the author have received the necessary contact with the rabbinic teachers whose influence is so evident in the book (p. 71).

CHAPTER III

FORM AND STRUCTURE AS A KEY TO INTERPRETATION:

A COMPARISON OF IV EZRA AND II BARUCH

As the survey of the history of research in the previous chapter has indicated, there have been many different approaches and conclusions in the attempt to understand the meaning of IV Ezra and the author's purpose for writing. In the study of IV Ezra, comparisons have frequently been made with II Baruch, and for good reason. Not only are both books apocalyptic laments, motivated by the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, and, which, accordingly deal with essentially the same problem, i.e., the demise of Israel, and the resultant questioning of God's effective rule in the world, but there are also striking structural and stylistic similarities between the two books.¹ The present chapter will attempt to deal with two major

1. Though virtually all scholars are agreed that IV Ezra and II Baruch are closely related to each other, there is no such unanimity on the question as to which of the books was first in point of time and accordingly a probable source and/or model for the author of the other. Eissfeldt (Intro., p. 629) reflects the opinion of many scholars who think II Baruch

formal characteristics which are at present in both books in an attempt to shed further light, in the first instance, on the interpretation of IV Ezra, but secondarily, on that of II Baruch as well. The two aspects of interest are the same ones which were the focus of attention in the preceding survey of the history of research: A. The use of the seven-episode scheme; B. The function of the dialogue format.

A. The Seven-episode Scheme in IV Ezra and II Baruch

The basic division of IV Ezra into seven episodes or visions has been accepted almost without question ever since Volkmar first made note of it. It is also generally agreed that there is a sharp contrast between the first three episodes and the last three, both in terms of outlook and content; the

is secondary because it demonstrates much less originality than IV Ezra. In addition, Eissfeldt cites another popular opinion, namely, that, in places, II Baruch appears to be polemicizing against his "model". Pierre Bogaert in *Apocalypse de Baruch* (*Sources Chrétiennes*, No. 144), I, Paris, 1969, gives a lengthy list of scholars on both sides of the question. For those favoring the priority of IV Ezra, he cites Ewald, Langen, Wieseler, Stähelin, Renan, Hausrath, Dillmann, Rosenthal, Hilgenfeld, Gunkel, Box, Violet, Zeitlin, and Lods. For those who favor the priority of II Baruch, he notes de Faye, Kabisch, Charles, Clemen, Wellhausen, Ryssel, Kohler, Sigwalt, Gry, and Schürer. For Bogaert, who also accepts the priority of II Baruch, the opinion of Schürer is particularly noteworthy. Bogaert himself makes the rather remarkable statement that the chronological relationship between the historical Baruch and Ezra represents the same relationship between the two books (*ibid.*, p. 113)! The issue of priority is not a crucial one for the present study, though the present writer is inclined to favor the priority of IV Ezra. It would appear, however, that arguments can be marshaled on both sides of the issue, and in the end, those scholars who have put their major efforts into the study of IV Ezra have preferred the priority of IV Ezra (e.g., Ewald, Dillmann, Hilgenfeld, Gunkel, Box, Violet), while those who have concentrated on II Baruch have opted for the priority of their "first love" (e.g., Charles, Ryssel, Bogaert). Gry would appear to be the main exception, while Kabisch and Rosenthal, who produced special studies of both books, decided on opposite sides of the question. That should at least illustrate the lack of firm evidence to support the priority of either book!

middle episode has been placed variously either with the first three, or the last three, or rather more independently as a transitional episode. Although a number of schemes have been proposed for organizing the episodes into an over-all pattern (3 + 3 + 1; 3 + 1 + 3; 3 + 4; 4 + 3), all of them are based on the observable difference in style and content that exists between the beginning and the end of the book. After the initial strident questioning of God's dealings by Ezra (episodes I-III), the author transforms the seer into a favored recipient of divine revelations (episodes IV-VII). The purpose of this part of the present chapter is to outline in some detail the literary units which make up the seven episodes as a first and essential step in the interpretation of the book. As a helpful corollary to the study of IV Ezra, the seven-episode structure of II Baruch is also analyzed here in a similar way. A seven-episode division is not so immediately self-evident in II Baruch as it is in IV Ezra, a fact which is reflected by the several slightly different ways that have been proposed for dividing up the book.² But, just as in IV Ezra, there is a transition from lament to

2. Bogaert I, p. 62, gives a chart with the division schemes of Renan, Schürer, Ginzberg, and Violet, plus that of his own. Charles (APOT II, p. 474) arrives at a division into seven episodes which excludes the epistle, by dividing at the fasts indicated in the text, plus, between chapters 35 and 36. Bogaert's scheme, which is the one accepted here, combines the first three of Charles' sections into one episode and accepts the epistle as the seventh section. Bogaert's detailed discussion and outline may be found in his first volume, pp. 58-67. In brief, however, the literary devices which he accepts as marking the divisions between the episodes may be outlined as follows; I is brought to a conclusion by a fast (12:5); II is concluded by a command for Baruch to fast and by a change in location (20:5-6); III is concluded with an address to the people (34:1); IV begins with a change of location (35:1), and ends with an address to the people (46:4-7) and an announced change in location (47:1); V begins with a fast and a change of location (47:2), concluding with an address to the people (52:1-7); VI begins with a vision (53:1-12) and concludes with an address to the people (77:17); VII begins with a change of location (77:18) which is followed by the introduction to the epistle and the epistle itself. The episodes in II Baruch

consolation, though the contrast between beginning and end is not nearly so sharp, nor is the point of transition clearly marked by means of style as well as content as is the case in IV Ezra. Nevertheless, the similarities between the books justify their parallel presentation at this point, both as a means of illustrating the similarities as well as a means of pinpointing some of the more elusive differences between the two.

In the outlines of the two books that follow, the various literary units are indicated by a letter key which corresponds to the brief description given below. There are some slight variations in the types and usage of the literary units in both books, but the following listing should be adequate for the sake of comparison. It will be noted that items g. and h. are peculiar to II Baruch.

are of quite diverse lengths, regardless of the division scheme adopted. In IV Ezra, however, the divisions are much more natural, and except for the long episode III, are reasonably well balanced as far as length is concerned. The division scheme which is accepted here is the same one proposed by Volkmar and which has gone essentially unchallenged since then. In brief, the episodes are marked off as follows: I opens with a prayer and concludes with a command to fast for seven days (5:20); II opens with a prayer and concludes with another command to fast for seven days (6:29-34); III opens with a prayer and concludes with the command to eat flowers for seven days (9:23-25); IV opens with a prayer, concluding with a command to wait until the second night in order to receive visions from the Most High (10:58-59); V opens with a vision and concludes with another seven days of flower feasting (12:51); VI opens with a vision and concludes with a command to wait three days in order to receive further instruction (13:56); VII opens with a vision (i.e., a voice of God from the bush) which is followed by the Ezra legend of the inspired books. Thus the first four episodes open with a prayer in each case, and each of the last three episodes open with visions. Furthermore, each episode is marked off from the next one by a period of two, three, or seven days. The seven-day period is used four times, and in addition, episode III opens with a reference to a seven-day fast which would complete "the three weeks as I had been told" (6:35). That implies that the author assumes the first vision to have been preceded by a fast, though it does not say so in the text. The reference bears a marked similarity to Daniel 10:2. Kabisch and Box took the missing fast as an indication of the reworking of the so-called Salathiel Apocalypse, but such a conclusion is not necessary (so Gunkel, Myers).

Literary Units Used in IV Ezra and II Baruch

- a. Prayer for enlightenment (with or without complaint)
- b. Dialogue with the angel (or God)
- c. Vision (or "revelation" of some sort)
- d. Interpretation or response from the angel (or God)
- e. Conversation with the people
- f. Epilogue (narrative in IV Ezra, epistolary in II Baruch)
- g. Initial instruction or command by God
- h. Lament (cf. a, supra)

The Sequence of Literary Units in IV Ezra and II Baruch

IV Ezra	II Baruch
I. 3:1-5:20	I. 1:1-12:5
a. 3:1-36	g. 1:1-2:2
b. 4:1-47	a. 3:1-9
c. 4:48-49	b. 4:1-5:4
d. 4:50-5:15	e. 5:5-7
e. 5:16-20	c. 6:1-8:5
	h. 9:1-12:5
II. 5:21-6:34	II. 13:1-20:6
a. 5:21-30	g. 13:1-12
b. 5:31-6:16	a. 14:1-19
c. 6:17-28	b. 15:1-20:6
d. 6:29-34	

IV Ezra

III. 6:35-9:25

- a. 6:35-59
- b. 7:1-9:25

IV. 9:26-10:59

- a. 9:26-37
- c. 9:38-10:27a
- a. 10:27b-28
- d. 10:29-59

V. 11:1-12:51

- c. 11:1-12:3a
- a. 12:3b-9
- d. 12:10-39
- e. 12:40-51

VI. 13:1-58

- c. 13:1-13a
- a. 13:13b-20a
- d. 13:20b-58

II Baruch

III. 21:1-34:1

- a. 21:1-26
- b. 22:1-30:5
- e. 31:1-34:1

IV. 35:1-47:1

- a. 35:1-5
- c. 36:1-37:1
- a. 38:1-4
- d. 39:1-40:4
- b. 41:1-43:3
- e. 44:1-47:1

V. 47:2-52:7

- a. 47:2-48:25
- b. 48:26-52:7

VI. 53:1-77:17

- c. 53:1-12
- a. 54:1-22
- d. 55:1-74:4
- b. 75:1-76:4
- e. 77:1-17

VII. 14:1-48

- c. 14:1-18
- b. 14:19-26
- e. 14:27-36
- f. 14:37-48

VII. 77:18-87:1

- f. 77:18-87:1

From the standpoint of structure alone, there seems to be a pattern of sorts, at least as far as IV Ezra is concerned. Each of the first four major episodes is marked with an initial prayer and the last three episodes begin with a vision or with a revelatory experience. The first three episodes also resemble each other in that the dialogue follows immediately upon Ezra's request for enlightenment (i.e., prayer). A pattern, however, is not so clear in II Baruch. For one thing, the major visions in II Baruch are scattered in episodes I, IV, and VI, rather than coming together in successive episodes as in IV Ezra. Also, in II Baruch, the first two episodes are initiated by God, rather than by the seer, though if the final lament in I (9:1-12:5) is linked with what follows rather than with what precedes, the second section would then begin with a speech by Baruch. If it were not for the prefixed divine address in episodes I and II, the first five episodes would begin with a prayer by Baruch. But in any case, in I-III, and V, Baruch's initial prayer is followed by a dialogue between the seer and God as in the first three episodes of IV Ezra. That, however, is about the limit of any formal symmetry.

B. The Dialogue Format

The function of the various literary units noted in the outlines above becomes more significant when the elements of the seven episodes are studied with a full awareness of the dialogue format which is used in both books. In

fact, there are two aspects that should be kept constantly in mind as of pivotal importance for the interpretation either of IV Ezra or of II Baruch. First, there is the initial tension between the distraught and complaining seer on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the heavenly representative, the defender of God's justice. If either aspect is ignored, the consequences for interpretation are considerable. With this in mind, the discussion that follows seeks to delineate more fully the tension that the authors of both books have established between the seer and the divine interlocutor, and to note how this tension is ultimately removed. In addition, there is frequent opportunity to compare and contrast the various aspects of one book with those of the other.

1. Character and Function of the Seer

a. Element of Complaint in the Prayers for Enlightenment

One of the elements which is used most effectively in both apocalypses is the prayer for enlightenment. Looking first at IV Ezra, one discovers distinct evidence for a change in emphasis on the part of the seer as the book progresses. The prayer of I (3:1-36) contains several complaints, directed specifically against God: God did not hinder the nations from sinning (3:8); he did not take away the evil heart so that the law could bear fruit (3:20); and he delivered his people into the hands of those who were even greater sinners than Israel (3:28-34). Likewise, the complaint is strong in the prayer of episode II (5:21-30); Why has God given his one nation over to the many? (5:28-30). In the prayer at the beginning of III (6:35-59), the accusatory note is also present: If the world was created

for us, why do we not receive our inheritance? (6:59). In IV, however, though the prayer (9:26-37) is only indirectly a prayer for enlightenment, the complaint has vanished and the blame is shifted on to man: Man will perish because he sins (9:33, 36), but the law remains in its glory (9:32, 37). Also in IV, there is another prayer for enlightenment after the transformation of the woman into the glorious city (10:27b-28). Here there is a sharp contrast with the complaints of the first three episodes, and the rather neutral prayer earlier in IV. Now, there is no longer complaint, but fear. Fear rather than complaint is also evident in the remaining two prayers for enlightenment: V (12:3b-9), VI (13:13b-20). In VII, there is only the request that the Holy Spirit be given to Ezra (14:19-22); neither complaint nor fear is present. The transition obviously takes place in IV: The first three prayers are complaints against God, and in these first three prayers there is agitation and concern, but no fear;³ the first prayer in IV shifts the emphasis onto man's failings while the second prayer in IV sets the pattern for the balance of the book as complaint is changed into proper fear and reverence in the presence of the divine.

In the prayers of II Baruch, the element of complaint is strong only in episode I (3:1-9; 10:6-12:4) and II (14:1-19). Yet even here, the direct attacks on God's way of handling sin are not so vigorous as those in IV Ezra. The element of complaint in the prayers of II Baruch is already weakened in III (21:1-26), and what little complaint that remains is

3. A possible exception would be 6:33 where the angel commands Ezra not to be afraid.

preceded by words that are highly laudatory to God. The complaint itself focuses on the delay of the consummation (21:19-26): Baruch does not want God's long-suffering to be mistaken for weakness (21:21)! That is quite a different emphasis thanⁿ that given by Ezra, who appears unsure as to whether he wants the consummation to come at all, at least this is true in episode III.⁴ In the fourth episode of II Baruch, there is a brief lament (35:1-5), but no genuine complaint; also in IV (38:1-4) there is Baruch's simple request for the interpretation of the vision of the Forest, Vine, Fountain, and Cedar, and Baruch cites his own righteous actions as the reason why God should grant his request. In the prayer of episode V (48:1-25), there are again elements of lament (48:11-20), but they constitute a simple plea to God for mercy; the tone of complaint is absent. In fact, Baruch praises God with lavish words (48:1-10), and is quite impressed with the righteousness of God's people (48:21-24). The prayer in episode VI (54:1-22) contains neither complaint nor lament, but simply praise for God, coupled with a request for enlightenment. This prayer is the only one that seems to have fear connected with it (cf. 53:12), unless fear is implied in II (14:12).⁵ Episode VII, the epistle, briefly relates in narrative fashion Baruch's cry of "How long?" (81:3), but hastens on to justify the

4. For further discussion of the traces of optimism in the Ezra speeches, see chapter IV, B, 2, b. In brief, 4:38ff and 5:43 suggest guarded optimism on the part of Ezra, but in episode III, Ezra classes himself with the sinners, so is not at all anxious that the consummation should come (cf. 7:18, 66, 116-126).

5. In 14:12ff, Baruch speaks of the righteous who can depart to their reward "without fear", but then with reference to himself, he states: "Woe to us" (14:14). This, however, is hardly a reverential fear on the part of a pious man, but simply a genuine fear of the future.

actions of the Most High, and to speak of his mercies to man (81:4). Thus, if there is a transition in Baruch's prayers, it would be very early on, namely, in episode III (21:1-26). There, praise has already gotten the upper hand, and genuine complaint disappears. Simple lament may surface briefly thereafter (IV, 35:1-5; V, 48:11-20), but is virtually overwhelmed by Baruch's lavish praise of his God. By contrast, in IV Ezra, the aspect of complaint holds the foreground much more firmly and much longer. When complaint does give way in IV Ezra, it appears to be replaced to a certain extent by fear, a transitional element that is of little importance in II Baruch. Further emphasizing the great contrast in tone between the two books is the dearth of praise on the lips of Ezra. Only twice does Ezra openly praise God (7:132-140; 13:57-58), but the first of these passages is so vitiated by the Ezra speeches that precede and follow it (7:116-126; 8:4-14), that it sounds rather more like wishful thinking than praise.⁶ Furthermore, the contrast in IV Ezra is heightened by the seer's final thrust at God just before the transitional episode IV begins: "I have

6. The suggestion that the midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 (IV Ezra 7:132-140) is more of an appeal than it is praise is noted by D. Simonsen ("Ein Midrasch im IV. Buch Esra," *Festschrift zu Israel Lewy's 70. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von M. Brann und J. Elbogen, Breslau, 1911, pp. 270-278). He concludes (p. 277) that Ezra, in his "Bittkampf" with God, has appealed to the revelation of Ex. 34:6-7 just as Moses did when he was imploring God for mercy on behalf of Israel in Num. 14:17-18. More recently, this aspect has been further emphasized by D. Boyarin ("Penitential Liturgy in IV Ezra," *JSJ* 3 (1972), pp. 30-34) who notes that Ezra is not simply making use of a hermeneutic tradition, but a liturgical one as well: "The author of 4 Ezra is not merely quoting a midrashic interpretation of these verses, but rather reflecting a ritual of reciting them in petition to God for succour" (*ibid.*, p. 32). The point of Boyarin's article is that there are several elements in IV Ezra 7:102-8:36 which reflect the Jewish penitential liturgy. For further comment on the function of 7:132-140 in its present context, see chapter VI, A, 1, C, ii, (a).

said it before, and I say it now, and will say it again: those who perish are more than those who will be saved, as a wave is greater than a drop of water!" (9:15-16).

b. Personal Pessimism of the Seer

Another aspect which highlights the transition in IV Ezra and illustrates the contrast between the two books is the personal pessimism of the seer relating to the assurance of salvation.⁷ There is a distinct reticence on the part of Ezra to claim right-standing with God and to consider himself within the fold of the remnant worthy who are destined to be saved. There are subtle proofs, however, of Ezra's true status. First of all, the choice of pseudonym gives the seer a certain standing. In addition, he is seen not only as the spokesman for God's people, but he is also privileged to have direct conversation with God's messenger or even with God himself. Finally,

7. Even if one does not accept the hypothesis that II Baruch is polemicizing against IV Ezra (as argued, e.g., by Violet II, p. LXXXIX, and strongly implied by Rosenthal, pp. 74ff), one can still maintain that there is a sharp difference in attitude between the two books: IV Ezra is pessimistic and II Baruch is optimistic. This is the basis of Rosenthal's argument that IV Ezra came from the sphere of influence of Eliezer b. Hyrkanos (see Rosenthal, pp. 60ff), and II Baruch from the school of Akiba (*ibid.*, pp. 94ff). Charles preferred to describe the contrast between the two books in terms of Hillel and Shammai (or at least their respective schools) because he saw parts of both books reaching back before A. D. 70 (cf. APOT II, pp. xii-xiii). Box (pp. lxiiff) notes concepts in IV Ezra which parallel Shammaite teaching as well as the views of Eliezer ben Hyrkanos. Kohler (1903, p. 222) also links IV Ezra with the school of Shammai. More recently, Brandenburger has noted the differences in the spirit of the two books (*op. cit.*, p. 39), but thinks that both authors were polemicizing, not against each other, but against the skeptical views which each author permitted his seer to express. Bogaert also speaks of the pessimism/optimism contrast (Bogaert I, p. 386), but finds no evidence in II Baruch of polemic against IV Ezra (*ibid.*, p. 389), which is not too unexpected since Bogaert holds to the priority of II Baruch in the first place.

episode VII places the seal upon Ezra's words and mission, for he requests and receives the Holy Spirit (14:22ff) so that he might impart God's revelation to mankind. As Volkmar has remarked, Ezra's message is thus just as much from God as is the message of the twenty-four books.⁸ Nevertheless, the author is careful to avoid placing words of self-approval in the mouth of Ezra himself. Only twice (12:9; 13:14) does Ezra claim his own worth in the eyes of God, yet each of these claims is rather indirect in that Ezra is simply citing God's prior attitude towards him as a means of buttressing his plea for the interpretation of the vision. In 13:14-15, he is saying, in effect: "Since you have shown me these wonders and have considered me worthy to have my prayer heard, now show me the interpretation of the dream." Much the same applies to 12:9, though the claim here is even more indirect because it follows a number of conditional clauses: "If I have found favor in your sight, and if I have been accounted righteous before you more than others, and if my prayer has indeed come up before your face...." (12:7). Ezra's argument could be paraphrased as follows: "If I have found favor in your eyes (and apparently I have because you have judged me worthy to be shown the end of the times), then show me the interpretation." The polite introductory formula: "If I have found favor in your sight....",⁹ occurs frequently on the lips of Ezra (4:44; 5:56; 6:11; 7:75, 102; 8:42; 12:7; 14:22), and

8. Volkmar, p. 331.

9. The formula is probably based on the OT model, e.g., in Gen. 18:3:

וְיָנִי בְעֵינֶיךָ יְיָ וְאַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ לִּי כִּדְבָרְךָ וְאַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ לִּי כִּדְבָרְךָ.

appears in each episode except VI. A second qualifying phrase is added to it in 4:44 ("if I am worthy"), and in 12:7-9, as noted above, three phrases are linked together to form the protasis. Ezra always receives a straightforward reply to his questions when thus prefaced, and on one occasion Uriel gives explicit confirmation: "Since you have found favor in my sight...." (7:104). Most of the occurrences of this phrase are linked with rather innocuous questions, but there are two exceptions: in 7:75, Ezra includes himself in the group that is expecting future torments. For this he is sharply rebuked by Uriel: "Do not be associated with those who have been scornful, nor number yourself among those who are tormented, for you have a treasure of works laid up with the Most High...." (7:76-77). The other exception is in 8:42-45 where Ezra objects to Uriel's comparing man to the farmer's seed. Man was formed by God's own hands, made in God's own image, and for man's sake all things were formed (8:44). There is an additional sting in this passage for Ezra prefaced his remarks by inferring that God is to blame: the farmer's seed may fail because "it has not received your (Lat., Syr.) rain in due season" (8:43). For these sharp words, Ezra is again rebuked, but not so much for his complaint, as for apparently classing himself with sinners--a point which is not included in Ezra's words immediately preceding: "For you fall far short of being able to love my creation more than I do. But you have often compared yourself to the unrighteous. You must not do so! But even in this respect you will be praised before the Most High, because you have humbled yourself, as is

proper for you, and have not considered yourself to be among the righteous. Therefore, you will be glorified all the more" (8:47-49).¹⁰ On just one other occasion in the pre-transition episodes does Uriel compliment Ezra's righteousness: "Your voice has surely been heard by the Most High; for the Mighty One has seen your uprightness and has also observed the purity which you have maintained from your youth" (6:32). This passage differs in at least two respects from the other two divine affirmations of Ezra's righteousness mentioned above (7:76-77; 8:47-49). First, it contains no rebuke; second, it does not follow upon provocative words by Ezra, occurring rather in Uriel's remarks to Ezra at the end of episode II, and forming Uriel's response after the second installment of the signs of the end (6:17-28).

There are explicit statements placed in the mouth of Ezra, however, which reveal the depth of the problem with which the author is struggling. In episode I, Ezra evidently belongs to God's people and is their spokesman, for in 3:34 he asks God to compare the sins of Israel with those of the inhabitants of the world. But thereafter, right through to the middle of episode IV, Ezra classes himself with the wicked and the lost. Both in episodes I and III there are striking statements in which Ezra classes himself with the sinful and perishing.¹¹ To illustrate the extent to which

[illegible]

11. One line of reasoning which Harnisch adopts to support his thesis that Ezra represents the view that all men are damned, involves an unwarranted interpretation of those statements, of which there are several, in which Ezra claims that all men are sinners. Harnisch apparently reasons that because all men are designated as sinners, all men are therefore doomed to

the author has allowed Ezra to thus categorize himself, listed below are the passages in which Ezra uses some form of the first person plural, either pronoun or verb to cast his lot with the sinners and/or the perishing.

	RSV	Latin (Violet I)	Syriac
4:12	1	1	7
4:24	3	3	5
4:38-39	2	3	5
7:48	6	5	6
7:64-69	8	9	11
7:75	1	1	1
7:117-126	15	19	23
8:17	1	2	1
8:31-32	5	6	8

The variations between the columns are not really very significant, the greater number of occurrences in the Syriac being due for the most part to the use of emphatic pronouns. In several passages, however, this usage is confirmed by the Latin, and in particular in the long lament of 7:117-126 where the Latin has five emphatic pronouns (in verses 119-123) that are not

to perish (e.g., Harnisch, p. 160, comment on 7:66-69). That interpretation is not only reading something into the text which is not there, but it also overlooks those statements in which Ezra specifically states that some will be saved (see chapter VI, A, 1, b, for full discussion). Furthermore, as Mundle has pointed out (*op. cit.*, p. 245), Ezra nowhere states that all men are lost; all men may be sinners, but sin can be forgiven (cf. 7:133, 139-140), and that presents quite a different situation from that posed by the unrepentant sinner. If the simple claim that all men are sinners represents a "gnosticizing heresy", then the OT itself is rather badly tainted (see chapter I, B, 1, for discussion of the OT view of the universality of moral evil).

reflected in the RSV translation.¹² This added emphasis from the Latin and Syriac on the already vividly attested pessimism of the seer heightens the tension between the seer and the angel and makes Ezra's ultimate consolation all the more remarkable. The last passage in which Ezra classes himself with the lost is in his introductory prayer in episode IV. His comment comes at the close of the prayer and is linked with praise for God's law--a rather neglected theme, heretofore, in the speeches of Ezra: "For we who have received the law and have sinned, will perish, as well as our heart which received it; the law, however, does not perish but remains in its glory" (9:36-37). Immediately thereafter, Ezra sees the woman on his right side, the side signifying good fortune.¹³ At this point, Ezra states: "Then I dismissed the thoughts with which I had been engaged, and turned to her and said to her, 'Why are you weeping, and why are you sorrowful in your soul?'" (9:39-40). The possible significance of these words as a transitional element will be discussed in a later section,¹⁴ but here it is

12. The RSV has adopted one additional first person plural in 7:121, attested by the Ethiopic (the Georgian has a leaf missing from the MS at this point), but not by the Latin or Syriac: "Or that safe and healthful habitations have been reserved for us...." RSV has also added a first person plural in 7:48 (apparently supported only by the Arabic-2, and that only marginally): "And that not just a few of us, but almost all who have been created." The Ethiopic (according to the German translation of Dillmann in Violet I) has added four first person plural references in 7:117 (which Violet II, p. 99, thinks may be original, at least in part): "And of what use is it to us that we all live in sorrow, and when we have died, the judgment still awaits us?" This brings the verse into line with the other first person plural lament-questions in 7:119-126, but it may be that the Ethiopic has standardized the form here without textual support since it has also introduced a balancing first person plural in 7:121 as noted above.

13. Volkmar, p. 134, cites Gesenius: "Die rechte Seite bedeutet bei den Semiten Glück." See also Myers, p. 271.

14. See chapter IV, D, for full discussion.

sufficient to note that, while Ezra still has some mournful words to utter (10:5-24), he does not again explicitly classify himself with the sinners and the lost.

There would appear to be clear evidence for a transition, then, in terms of Ezra's personal status vis-a-vis God. Up to and including 9:36, Ezra classes himself with the perishing while studiously avoiding any claim of moral worth for himself. Yet even in the latter part of the book, his two references to his own standing with God (12:9: 13:14) are quite indirect. From the mouth of Uriel, however, there are three solid affirmations of Ezra's standing with God in the early episodes (II, 6:31-32; III, 7:76-77; 8:47-54), which should surely be sufficient to guard against the temptation to which Harnisch has succumbed of identifying Ezra's point of view as a gnosticizing heresy. And these words of praise from God continue through the balance of the book as well, with definite confirmation of Ezra's status in each of the last four episodes:

IV, 10:57 Ezra is more blessed than many.

V, 12:36 Ezra alone is worthy to learn the "secret" from the Most High.

VI, 13:53-56 Ezra alone is worthy to receive the interpretation of the vision.

VII, 14:8ff Ezra is promised translation.

14:37ff Ezra is filled with the Holy Spirit.

It would appear, then, that the divine attitude toward Ezra has been constant. The change appears in the words of Ezra, and here it is not so much that he changes from pessimism to buoyant optimism, but rather that he simply ceases his complaining and adopts a more passive role marked by fear in the presence of the divine.

Closely related to those passages in which Ezra includes himself among the perishing, are those passages in which he expresses a death-wish, or, in which he simply laments man's tragic lot. Of particular interest are 5:35; 7:62-63; 7:116-117; 8:4-5; 10:10. These passages are all in the early episodes. In the latter part of IV Ezra there is nothing at all comparable, though in each episode there seems to be a harking back to Ezra's earlier problems. For example, in V, 12:4, Ezra suggests that he has received the frightful vision of the eagle because he had attempted to search out the way of the Most High. In VI, 13:16-20, there is terminology that recalls the agony of 4:12 where Ezra had contended that it would have been better not to exist at all than to be in the world, to live in ungodliness, to suffer and not understand why. But in episode VI, though Ezra seems to be debating with himself whether or not it is worthwhile to endure the troubles of the last days, in the end, he does state that it is better to endure the trouble than to just pass away like a cloud. As if to dispel any doubt that may linger on, the heavenly respondent states shortly thereafter that "those who are left are more blessed than those who have died (13:24). In episode VII, there is another likely reference to Ezra's earlier problems when he is admonished to put away his mortal thoughts (Lat., Eth., Ar-1), to cast away the burdens of man, and to lay aside his most disturbing thoughts (14:14). These probable references to the discussions of the earlier episodes help to link the two parts of the book together while at the same time calling attention to the fact that there has been a transition--Ezra is no longer to argue against God, but he is to be with him.

Against this picture of the seer in IV Ezra, it is instructive to compare the author's presentation of the seer in II Baruch. As in IV Ezra, there are several general indications of the seer's right-standing in the eyes of God: the choice of pseudonym, Baruch's role as the representative of God's people who has direct contact with God or God's angel, and his role as spokesman for God is more prominent in II Baruch and appears much earlier when compared with the situation in IV Ezra. Although Ezra speaks for God rather ambiguously in episode IV, he is not clearly established as God's spokesman until VII. In II Baruch, however, in the transitional episode III the seer has begun to speak on behalf of God (32:1ff) and his praise of God multiplies from there. In fact, God had commanded him to be his spokesman already at the first of II (13:3-12). In the post-transition episodes in II Baruch, the seer clearly and actively speaks in defense of God, while in IV Ezra, the post-transition episodes depict the seer simply as the passive recipient of visions, at least until episode VII.

Not only in general terms is there a contrast between the attitudes and behavior of the two seers, but the same is true of specific aspects. Most prominent in this respect is the way in which the author shows no hesitation in classing Baruch among the righteous, not only by means of second person references, but with first person references as well. The form of II Baruch contributes to this tendency by giving God the initial word in both episodes I and II. The very first speech by God confirms Baruch as a holy man: "Your works are to this city as a firm pillar, and your prayers as a strong wall" (2:2). Accordingly, he is told to separate himself from the city so that it may be destroyed (2:1). Also in episode I, Baruch is placed in close association with Jeremiah "whose heart was found pure from sins" (9:1).

In other words, the author of II Baruch is much more concerned to class his hero among the righteous and to sharply delineate him from the wicked and the perishing. Like Ezra, Baruch receives repeated assurances from God of his future reward. This occurs in five contexts: he is promised either that he will be preserved (13:3; 25:1; 76:2), or that he will be translated (48:30; 76:2; cf., 43:1-2), or that he will receive many "eternal consolations" (43:1-2). The promise of translation comes much earlier than in IV Ezra. But the most noticeable contrast with IV Ezra is the claim of righteousness on the lips of the seer himself. The polite phrase: "If I have found favor in your eyes...", occurs only twice and without particular significance (3:2; 28:6), but twice Baruch speaks of his own righteous behavior (38:4; 48:22), and once, in quite glowing terms of his privileged position in God's eyes (54:9-11). Yet the picture is not entirely consistent, for both in episode VI and in VII he admits that only through God's mercies can man be saved (75:5; 84:11), which runs rather contrary to the dominant trend of the book, namely, that man is quite capable of obeying God's commands, and thereby able to gain future bliss by merit (cf. 44:7; 46:5; 48:22; 51:3,7; 63:3, 5; 85:2).¹⁵

15. A. F. J. Klijn, "The Sources and the Redaction of the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch," JSJ 1 (1970), pp. 65-76, has commented on the use of sources by the author of II Baruch. He notes that the author has made use of many traditions while not always agreeing with the contents of these traditions. Klijn illustrates his point by referring to the remarks on the temple and to the content of the dream-visions. Although these aspects are perhaps more "concrete" than the theological aspects related to the doctrine of salvation, and thus can be more readily identified, the same principle would seem to be applicable to the more theological traditions as well, though perhaps to a lesser degree. Thus, while the attempts to specifically delineate the various sources (Kabisch and Charles) have come to an end as Klijn notes (p. 65), there remains the possibility of explaining disparate elements within the books on the basis of the author's failure to produce a homogeneous piece out of the various traditions that he has brought together.

In spite of Baruch's relatively confident expectations for his own personal destiny, there are indications in II Baruch of a general uneasiness, or even despair concerning man's lot. But these hints of general pessimism appear to have been overshadowed by the author's over-all plan for the book which develops rather quickly into a full consolation pattern affirming God's justice. The major laments and complaints in II Baruch are, for the most part, centered on the demise of Israel (cf. 3:1-9; 5:1; 10:6-12:4; 14:1-19; 48:2-24), but there are glimpses of a concern for mankind in general, particularly in 14:10-19 and 48:11-19, though even here one gets the impression that the author really has the Israelite man in mind. In spite of his concern over Zion, the author still believes that God is in control, for not only is God responsible for destroying Zion because of her sins (6:1-8:2), but God even goes so far as to say that Zion was destroyed in order that the consummation might come more speedily (20:2). In the first episodes, Baruch wishes that he were dead (3:2), and states that it would be preferable to be dead or to never have been born (10:6; 11:6-7). In a similar vein, he bemoans the transitory nature of man (14:10-19; 16:1; 48:11-19), expresses momentary concern over the large number who go astray (18:1-2; 48:43), or even reveals some reluctance to face the troubles of the last days (32:5; 52:3). But the aspect which sets Baruch most noticeably apart from Ezra is his avid expectation of the end-time. This is brought out rather vividly in two statements at the beginning of III: "For if there were this life only, which belongs to all men, nothing could be more bitter than this" (21:13); and, "For if a consummation had not been prepared for all, in vain would have been their beginning" (21:17). So, while the authors of both IV Ezra and II Baruch are thoroughly disenchanted

with this present age, only the author of II Baruch has managed to convince himself that the consummation is indeed a genuine hope, and thereby a sufficient theodicy.

c. Attitude towards the Wicked

From the mouth of Ezra, there is very little in the way of open animosity towards the wicked. Twice in chapter 3, those who have conquered Zion are referred to as God's enemies (3:27, 30), and in this same chapter the sins of the wicked are mentioned frequently, but there is no expressed desire for vengeance. It would appear that the sins of Babylon are only mentioned as a means of throwing the injustice of Israel's plight into bold relief. In 3:28, 31, Ezra asks if Babylon's deeds are any better than Israel's. The element of contrast is also present in the introductory prayers of II and III. In 5:21-30, however, the wickedness of Babylon is not mentioned, but simply the contrast between and one and the many in view of God's election promises to Israel. In 6:56-57, the contrast is again in the context of election, rather than that of comparative righteousness. In words probably drawn from Is. 40:15ff, it is said that the nations "who are considered as spittle, rule over God's chosen people".¹⁶ From episodes IV-VI there are also brief passages which reveal the seer's attitudes toward the wicked. In 10:23, there is a reference to the seal of Zion being given over to those that "hate us". The eagle in episode V clearly represents the enemy or

16. Both IV Ezra 6:56 and II Baruch 82:5 reflect the LXX rendition of Is. 40:15 which renders "spittle" (σίελος = פֶּת) instead of the Hebrew "small dust" (פֶּת).

enemies of God's people. When his judgment and destruction is announced (11:39-46; 12:32-33), his wickedness is condemned, but there is no tone of vengeance. Likewise, the judgment and condemnation of the wicked is mentioned in the Son of Man vision (13:37-38, 49), but again there is only judgment and destruction--no relishing of vengeance on the part of the saved. Episode VII, which deals almost exclusively with God's people, adds very little data relating to the fate of the wicked. The considerable material in episode III which relates to the attitudes towards the wicked will be dealt with in chapter IV, but it is sufficient to note here that as far as Ezra is concerned in episode III, he has nothing but a positive concern for those who are perishing.¹⁷

17. The relatively mild attitude toward the "wicked" on the part of Ezra, even in the latter half of the book, could be connected with the author's scheme which includes Ezra among those whose probable destiny is destruction. It is remarkable that some scholars have generalized about IV Ezra's pessimism to the extent that the book has been characterized as the product of a narrow sectarian. This view of IV Ezra probably received much of its impetus from Rosenthal (e.g., pp. 74ff, 93ff). Even Bogaert (I, p. 410) speaks of the spirit of optimism and universalism in II Baruch which contrasts with the outlook of IV Ezra. But it would seem to be erroneous to link optimism and universalism together in this way, for while the author of IV Ezra may be pessimistic about ultimate salvation, he is very much a universalist in the sense that he considers every member of the human family to be a creature of God, with each man suffering the same liabilities as his brother (cf. 7:62ff; 8:4ff). Keulers has noted the fact that one does not find hateful expressions against the heathen in IV Ezra (Keulers, p. 22). Furthermore, Ezra actually shows a heartfelt pity for his heathen brothers: "Nicht nur sind ihm Rachegefühl und Hass gegen die Heiden fremd, sondern er hat sogar Mitleid mit ihnen" (*ibid.*, p. 35). Rosenthal put much weight on the fact that IV Ezra makes no provision for the salvation of the Gentiles (Rosenthal, p. 83ff). Accordingly, Charles, for example, can speak of the "harsher" view of IV Ezra (APOT II, p. 518, note). But Klausner would appear to be closer to the truth when he refuses to adopt an argument from silence, preferring to accept the probability of salvation for the Gentiles on the analogy of the explicit statements from II Baruch (Klausner, *op. cit.*, pp. 360, 363). Thus the "glad" in IV Ezra 13:2-13 are the Gentiles who did not oppress Israel as in II Baruch 72:2-6 (*ibid.*, p. 360 where Klausner also cites the same view from the Talmud in Pesahim 118b).

In II Baruch, there appears to be more animosity towards the Gentiles and a tendency to speak of vengeance as a necessary part of the consolation of Israel. The author of II Baruch does not hesitate to admit that man has sinned and therefore deserves his fate (cf. 44:4ff; 48:47; 54:14; 78:3ff), and though there is lament over man's deplorable condition, there is not the same depth of concern over man's apparent inability to conform to God's will as is evident in IV Ezra. Accordingly, Baruch combines admonition to Israel with harsh words for those who boast over Israel's demise. Baruch's parochial interest is first evident in 3:7-8 where he implies that if Israel is allowed to perish, the whole world will cease to exist. Also in episode I, Baruch begins to reveal both scorn and envy over the enemies who "boast" before their idols (5:1), or who are simply arrogant in their supremacy over Israel (12:1-4). He states that there would have been grief if Babylon and Zion had even simply been equal in glory, but now that Babylon is more prosperous, the grief is infinite (11:1-2). In episode II, God commands Baruch to speak against the prosperous nations who have been ungrateful for God's blessings and have trodden down the earth (13:3-12). In episode III, Baruch expresses a simple interest in the fate of "our enemies" (24:4), but beginning in episode IV, Baruch speaks with increasing vigor and frequency about the just condemnation of the wicked: the new world will have "no mercy on those who depart to torment" (44:12), and their dwelling "shall be in the fire" (44:15). In V, Baruch states that "there is no numbering of those whom the fire devours" (48:43), and "regarding all these their end shall convict them, and your law which they have transgressed shall requite them on your day" (48:47). At the close

of V, there is a suggestion that the righteous should look to their own reward rather than to the decline of their enemies (52:5-7; cf., also 83:5), but Baruch's comments in VI and VII hardly follow through on this advice, for he speaks of just retribution on those who have not loved the law (54:14-15), directly addresses the wicked, describing their judgment (54:17), and states that vengeance will be taken on the wicked at the consummation (54:21). In a brief prose interlude, Baruch expresses his amazement that the sinners could reject such great goodness and despise the great torment to come (55:2). But the high point of vengeance is attained in 82:2-9 which elaborates in vivid detail the guilt of the Gentiles and how God will "avenge us on all our enemies according to all that they have done to us" (82:2). Thus, while Baruch is consistently more hostile to the enemies of Israel and the wicked than is Ezra, the greatest contrast in emphasis is evident from the epilogues of both books, for Ezra consoles his people with only the slightest reference to the wicked (14:35), but Baruch includes in his closing epistle a paean of vengeance on those who have oppressed Israel. Admittedly, Baruch is explicit in offering hope of salvation to repentant Gentiles and to those who have not oppressed Israel (72:2-6; cf., 42:5), but his attitude toward sinners in general is much harsher than that of Ezra.

2. Character and Function of the Divine Respondent

Just as there are marked contrasts between the attitudes and outlook of Ezra and those of Baruch, so there is a corresponding difference in the character of the divine interlocutor in each book. This is evident in at least three aspects, each of which will be dealt with in turn below:

a. The degree to which harsh and unattractive elements appear in the

teaching of the divine respondent; b. The use of the angelic figure as mediator; and c. The quality and effectiveness of the answers supplied by the divine respondent, as seen against the intensity of the questions posed by the seer.

a. Unattractive Elements in the Speeches of the Divine

Respondent

In IV Ezra, the author has heightened the tension between the seer and God by the way in which he has used the divine replies to answer Ezra's queries. There are at least three significant aspects of the divine side of the dialogue that would tend to attract the sympathies of the reader (at least the modern reader) to the side of Ezra: (1) The Number of the Saved: Few vs. Many. Both Ezra (7:47; 9:15) and the angel (7:60-61; 8:1) agree that few will be saved and many lost, but this is precisely the situation that Ezra deplors (7:45-48). The angel, however, seems perfectly content to damn the many and save the few (7:20, 60-61; 8:3). This aspect will be dealt with in depth in chapter IV so further details need not be given here. (2) Determinism. Though Ezra grieves about the many who will be lost, his attitude towards this state of affairs does not appear to be one of rigid determinism.¹⁸ Where Ezra comes closest to using the language of determinism is in the more positive concept of election (3:13, 16;

18. For further discussion of the views of Ezra and Uriel on determinism and freedom, see chapter VI, A, 1, a. It might be noted here that if Ezra represents the view which considers man to be subject to a certain "Verhängnis" (Harnisch), it is nevertheless Uriel who propounds a much more dogmatic "Verhängnis".

5:23ff; 6:54ff). Uriel, on the other hand, frequently states or implies that the ways of God must run their set courses with no haste or delay, which is not an unexpected concept in an apocalyptic work such as IV Ezra,¹⁹ but the unsettling aspect of Uriel's determinism is the way in which he appeals to God's predetermined plans as a sufficient answer to Ezra's searching questions (cf., 4:34-37, 40-43; 5:42, 48-49; 7:70-74; 8:41, 46). Uriel's view appears in its harshest form in the following passage: "For how long the time is that the Most High has been patient with those who inhabit the world, yet not for their sake, but because of the times which have been determined" (7:74). In other words, the Most High has been patient, but it has nothing to do with man's needs, only the needs of God's scheme for the world. The only occasion when Ezra expresses agreement with God's determined scheme is in his lonely word of praise at the end of episode VI; there he praises God because "he governs the times and whatever happens in them" (13:58). (3) Attitude towards the Lost. Whereas Ezra is in deep agony over those who are perishing (7:45ff; 8:4ff), Uriel frequently opposes this view and does so in a variety of ways: he states that God will rejoice over the saved, but will not grieve over the lost (7:60-61, 131), and that he will not concern himself about the fashioning, death, judgment, or destruction of those who have sinned, but will rejoice over the righteous (8:38), and he directly warns Ezra not to be concerned about the punishment or destruction of those who perish (8:55; 9:13), but to think on the saved. Finally, he simply states: "Let the multitude perish...but let my grape

19. On apocalyptic determinism, see Russell, pp. 230-234.

and my plant be saved (9:22). As is evident in the last instance, even when Uriel deals with election, he demonstrates his callous unconcern for the lost.

In view of the rather harsh position assumed by Uriel in IV Ezra, it is interesting to note the much milder approach which is characteristic of the divine respondent in II Baruch. In fact, some of the "unattractive" attitudes demonstrated by Uriel are hardly noticeable in the divine side of the dialogue in II Baruch. Part of the reason for this stems from the fact that Baruch is not nearly so incisive as Ezra in his questioning and accordingly does not bring out the sharp contrast which is so obvious in IV Ezra. For the sake of contrasting the two books, however, it is helpful to determine to what extent the unattractive attitudes which have been seen to be present in the divine respondent in IV Ezra are also present in II Baruch. (1) Number of the Saved: Few vs. Many. This contrast, which is so thoroughly enmeshed into the argument of IV Ezra is virtually non-existent in II Baruch. Baruch once contrasts the many wicked nations with the few who will be left in the last days (14:2), but this is hardly equivalent to the many perishing and the few saved as in IV Ezra. Baruch's predominant attitude could be described in terms of the many who have sinned and who will perish, and the not inconsiderable number who will be saved (cf. 21:11; 41:3-4). Baruch does remark on the large number who will be lost (44:15; 48:43), but only once does he really appear to approximate the Ezra-type lament: "The one who lighted has taken from the light, and only a few have imitated him. But the large number whom he has lighted have taken from the darkness of Adam and have not rejoiced in the light of the

lamp" (18:1-2). If, then, the many/few contrast is virtually absent from the lips of Baruch, one would expect it to become even less evident in the speeches from the divine respondent. In point of fact, the many/few argument, in the sense used in IV Ezra, is completely absent from the divine side of the dialogue. Only twice is there a many/few contrast of any sort on the lips of the divine respondent, and those occur in two passages which describe the woes preceding the messianic kingdom, referring simply to the anomalous state of affairs that will exist then: the few and weak will rule over the many and strong (70:4ff; cf. 48:33ff). It would appear then, that both Baruch and God would be inclined to agree that many will be lost, but quite a few will be saved, thus approximating the post-consolation pattern in IV Ezra, but nowhere in II Baruch does the many/few argument appear with the intensity that it does in episodes I-III in IV Ezra.

(2) Determinism. While there are numerous indications in II Baruch that God has a fixed scheme of things which will be brought to pass in due course (cf. 5:2; 12:4; 20:6; 23:4-5; 27:1; 42:6; 69:2), God's determined plan is not presented as a final and sufficient answer in the same cavalier manner as in IV Ezra. The primary reason for this would again appear to stem from the author's characterization of the seer. Right at the beginning of III, Baruch is seen to have full confidence in God's government, and he hopes fervently for the consummation (21:4-26). At the end of IV, in his address to the people, he again explicitly affirms God's justice, both in the present age (44:5-6), and in the age to come (44:7-15). When the seer is thus convinced of God's justice, there is no way that the appeal to God's plan for the world can be made to appear as an evasive answer to a serious question. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to Uriel's hard-hearted attitude

in IV Ezra 7:74 where God is said to be long-suffering not for man's sake, but because of the (pre) determined times, II Baruch 24:2 produces the following words from the divine respondent: "You will see--and the many who are with you--the long-suffering of the Most High, which (has been evident) in every generation; (the Most High) who has been long-suffering towards all who have been born, both to those who have sinned and to (those who) are righteous." Thus, while there are elements of determinism in II Baruch, the author seems not to have used them to heighten the tension between the seer and God as has been done in IV Ezra. If anything, in II Baruch, God's plan for his world represents a point of agreement between the seer and God.

(3) Attitude towards the Lost. For the most part, the attitudes of the seer and the divine respondent towards the wicked are hardly distinguishable from each other in II Baruch. Baruch is perhaps more interested in vengeance (cf. 82:1-9), while the divine respondent tends to emphasize the fact that whatever punishment and torment is meted out to the lost is fully merited because man has sinned with full knowledge of the law (15:1-8; 19:1ff; 48:38-40). In one passage, God links retribution to the sin of ingratitude (13:3-12). The divine respondent is not totally anti-Gentile, for at the outset God is said to have scattered Israel so that they might do good to the Gentiles (1:4), and God is long-suffering even to the wicked (12:4; 24:2; 48:30). But at the same time, those who attack Israel are referred to as enemies (5:3; 8:2), and God is just as displeased about the boasting of the Gentiles as is Baruch (67:1-2). While God does speak of torment for the wicked (30:4-5; 51:4-6), the author seems to have placed the most vigorous words of vengeance on the lips of Baruch (54:17-21; 82:1-9).

It would appear, then, that as far as the dialogue partners are concerned, the situation in II Baruch is quite the reverse from that in IV Ezra. Ezra is virtually the spokesman for the perishing, at least in episode III, and is opposed by an unyielding Uriel. Baruch, on the other hand, very quickly joins the divine respondent, and perhaps even goes beyond him, in condemning those who go to destruction; Baruch and God are agreed that the destruction of the wicked is just and proper.

b. Use of the Angel as Mediator.

Considered from a more formal point of view, there is another contrast between IV Ezra and II Baruch, and that lies in the way that their respective authors have made use of an angelic figure as a mediator between God and man. The author of IV Ezra has used a mediating figure (Uriel) to a much greater extent than has the author of II Baruch. Nevertheless, it must still be noted that the author of IV Ezra has rather thoroughly obscured the distinction between God and the angel Uriel. In episode I, Uriel seems to be used consistently, but in episode II, 5:40-6:28, Ezra appears to be talking directly with God his creator, yet Uriel clearly returns at the close of the dialogue (6:30-34). In episode III, there is even a more thorough mixing of elements, for not only are there separate sections in which God apparently speaks in the first person (7:11-16, 59-61; 8:37-41), or in which Uriel speaks of him in the third person (7:70-74), there are also lengthy, uninterrupted sections of the divine response which oscillate between the third person and the first person when referring to divine activities (7:19-44; 8:46-62; 9:1-13, 17-25). Episodes IV and V appear

to use the angel consistently, while VI returns to the mixing of first and third person references. In episode VII, God himself is the interlocutor; no mediating angel appears at all. This blurring of the distinction between God and the angel is reinforced by the way in which Ezra uses the same titles of address whether conversing with God or the angel.²⁰ It may be significant, however, that Uriel is last mentioned by name in IV, 10:28, for, given the inadequacy of the divine arguments in episodes I-III, as will be noted below, it may be a conscious literary device on the part of the author to let the relatively unbending image of Uriel fade from the scene once the consolation pattern has been established. That may be pushing the author's intentions too far, for the angelic mediator does not completely disappear until episode VII, yet given all the other elements that point towards the transition in IV, it remains a possibility that the omission of Uriel's name in the later episodes is intentional.

In II Baruch, the author's usage of the angelic mediator differs considerably from that of the author of IV Ezra. In IV Ezra, Uriel takes the brunt of Ezra's complaints, whereas in II Baruch, the angel (Ramiel) only appears for episode VI, and there simply as the interpreter of the vision of the cloud with the black and white waters (55:3-76:4). In II Baruch, the divine response is introduced in a number of ways: word of the Lord (ܠܕܝܢ)

20. Myers (p. 121) notes that "Most High" (*altissimus*, ܠܕܝܢ) occurs sixty-eight times in IV Ezra and is the preferred term for God in the book. In direct address, however, some form of "Lord" (often, *domine*, ܕܡܢܝܢ) is preferred, and Ezra uses it without distinction to address the angel (e.g., 4:5, 22, 41; 5:33-34), or to speak directly to God (e.g., 3:4; 5:23; 6:38). The phrase which the RSV renders as "O sovereign Lord" (e.g., 3:4; 5:23, 38; 7:45) represents the Latin "O dominator domine" and the Syriac ܕܡܢܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܢܝܢ.

in 1:1, word of God (ܠܡܕܐ) in 10:1, a voice from the height (13:1; 22:1), and in 76:1 word of the Most High (ܠܡܕܐ ܥܠܝܐ), apparently spoken by Ramiel, and most commonly, by the third person singular pronoun which in the Syriac is either included in the verb, or given emphatic status by means of a separate pronoun. Whereas in IV Ezra, there is an oscillation between the first person and third person in the divine speeches, in II Baruch, that characteristic is minimal: in 24:2 there is a reference to "long-suffering of the Most High" included in an otherwise first person speech; likewise, in 48:38-40, there is a reference to "Mighty One" and "Judge" in a first person speech. But both of the above cases would appear to involve simply a stylistic variation.

Given the differences between the use of an angelic mediator in IV Ezra and II Baruch, the question is raised as to whether or not this difference is a significant variation. If the difference in usage is significant, and that is not at all certain, it could very well be related to the greater dialogue tension which is evident in IV Ezra and the greater intensity of Ezra's questions as compared with those of Baruch. It could be that the author of IV Ezra felt his complaints to be so sharp that he hesitated to address them directly to God; and, perhaps what is even more important, the author apparently felt compelled to place some rather unattractive arguments and attitudes on the divine side of the dialogue and found it easier to use Uriel as a mediating figure.²¹ At any rate, the gap between the two

21. Myers (p. 252) notes that "apocalyptic is fond of shifting between an intermediary and the Lord himself", but there remains a considerable difference between the use of the angelic mediator in IV Ezra and II Baruch, a feature which is noted by Bogaert (I, p. 426). Bogaert states (*ibid.*) that

dialogue partners in II Baruch is minimal by comparison with IV Ezra. Whatever tension is felt between them is virtually resolved by episode III, and, of course, episode III in II Baruch occurs much earlier in the book than the corresponding episode does in IV Ezra since the early episodes in II Baruch are so much shorter. By virtue of the fact that the dialogue partners are much closer to agreement in II Baruch, and in fact, rather quickly merge into a single point of view,²² the reader is not so aware of any inadequacy in the divine response. Inadequate answers can actually look quite good, if no one asks the embarrassing questions! But this point must be taken up in greater detail.

c. Adequacy of the Divine Response

To speak in terms of the "adequacy" of the divine response is a rather risky thing to do because "adequacy" is such a subjective element. Although there is undoubtedly a tendency to judge "adequacy" in terms of the modern reader, there is a very real sense in which one can evaluate "adequacy" in terms of the seer, whether in IV Ezra or in II Baruch, since each seer is constantly interacting with the divine respondent. In the discussion that follows, "adequacy" will be considered primarily from the seer's point of

the use of the angel in Baruch is very similar to that of the OT where the angel of the Lord can assume the characteristics of the Lord himself. In IV Ezra, however, though this aspect is present, Uriel assumes a much more definite mediating role, and thus intercepts some of the sharpness of Ezra's attacks.

22. The loss of the dialogue tension in II Baruch has been noted by Brandenburger (op. cit., p. 36) and in somewhat more detail by Harnisch (pp. 72ff). Hayman (op. cit.) speaks of the loss of "dramatic tension" in the dialogue of II Baruch.

view, and the data for such an evaluation must, by and large, be taken from the reactions of the seer to the divine response.

Looking first at IV Ezra, one discovers that the inadequacy of the divine answers is especially apparent in episodes I-III where they are in juxtaposition to Ezra's searching questions. The inadequacy may be on either of two levels: (1) The answer may simply be evasive, with no attempt to provide a genuine explanation. This aspect is particularly prominent in I and II. (2) The answer may be inadequate in terms of content because Judaism was not equipped to give a satisfactory explanation to the questions being asked.²³ Actually, it would appear that the "explanations" in the latter half of IV Ezra represent very little improvement over the ones in I-III, but by virtue of the fact that Ezra has ceased his questioning, they do not stand out as so glaringly deficient. It is with the purpose of documenting this deficiency in the divine replies that the arguments of I-III are summarized below.

In episode I, Ezra complains both about Israel's fate (3:28-34; 4:23) and the fate of mankind in general (4:12; cf. 4:24, 38-39). Towards the end of the dialogue he asks simple informational questions about the end-time (4:33, 45, 51). In response, Uriel gives essentially three answers. First, he claims that Ezra is not able to understand God's ways, especially since he cannot even understand the affairs of this earth. He illustrates his point by posing three impossible questions for Ezra (4:1-11), and by telling the parable of the sand and the forest (4:13-21). Second, he infers that

23. Given the nature and cause of Ezra's problem, Violet II (p. XL) notes that it was "nicht losbar" for a Jew.

the problem is beyond Ezra's (or God's) control, because of the evil seed sown in Adam's heart which must come to full fruition (4:26-32). Third, he infers that God's predetermined plans eliminate any link between human activity and the coming consummation. He illustrates this by referring to the souls in their chambers who are waiting for their number to be completed (4:34-37), and by referring to the womb, which yields the child only at the proper time (4:40-43). Finally, as a capstone to his evasiveness, Uriel gives the signs for which Ezra did not ask (5:1-12).²⁴ It is a fruitless task to attempt to discern any real explanation in these responses in episode I. Not even an inadequate orthodoxy has been brought into play. Uriel simply appeals to divine authority with no attempt to explain.

The pattern in episode II is remarkably similar to that of I. Ezra again is concerned about Israel's fate (5:28-30, 35), and about events of the end-time (5:41, 43, 45). Towards the end of the dialogue, he again lapses into simple informational questions (5:50, 56; 6:7), asking finally for the second installment of the signs (6:12). In response, Uriel states, just as in episode I, that Ezra simply cannot understand. This takes the form of a blunt "You cannot!" (non potes) (5:35), and Uriel gives emphasis

24. Ezra's question in 4:51 is dealt with differently in the versions. The RSV "who" represents the Latin (quis) and the Syriac (ܩܝܣ). Myers accepts the Ethiopic "what" (quid instead of quis) which is also supported by the two Arabic versions. For the Georgian, Blake renders "whatever" (quidquam) which could also be taken in support of Myers' reading. But then just the change of one letter in the Latin and the moving of the diacritical point from below to above in the Syriac would also permit these versions to support Myers' preference. Nevertheless, even if one does read "What will be in those days?" instead of "Who will live in those days?", there is still a very poor correlation with Uriel's statement: "About the signs which you asked me...." (4:52).

to his response by asking Ezra seven impossible questions (5:36-40).²⁵

Uriel's determinism also comes out in II when he uses the figure of a circle: "no slowness, no haste" (5:42), and the figure of the womb: children are born one at a time, not all at once (5:46-49). Also in II, Uriel gives a sharp rebuke to Ezra for his persistent questioning: "Between the heel and the hand look for nothing else, Ezra!" (6:10).²⁶ The inadequacy of the divine response again is marked most by its evasiveness. Uriel still attempts no genuine explanation.

In episode III, there is a shift in Uriel's tactics, and rabbinic explanations begin to be more obvious in the divine replies. Ezra begins the dialogue by expressing concern about the delay in Israel's inheritance (6:55-59), but he quickly and almost completely shifts his interest to the fate of the many wicked (7:18, 46-48, 62-69, 116-126; 8:4ff). He laments the good things that the wicked will miss (7:116-126), and wonders if the righteous can intercede on their behalf (7:102-103, 106-111). Finally, he appeals to God to look upon the faithful in Israel, rather than upon the wicked (8:26-30), but more than that, to look with favor on those with no store of good works (8:31-36). It is noteworthy, that, in spite of the inordinant length of III, Ezra asks very few simple informational questions

25. Syriac (supported by the Ethiopic, Georgian, Ar-1, Ar-2) has an additional line, not included in the Latin. After the line: "And release for me the winds that are shut up in them", the Syriac adds: "And show me the form of faces that you have not yet seen". Given the author's penchant for groups of seven (see Keulers, p. 21, for a list of some of the instances where the number seven occurs, both by explicit mention in the text and as a literary device), it is quite likely that the extra line should be included.

26. Each of the versions has significant and unique variations for 6:8-10 (see Violet I and II *in loco*), but all of the versions include the angel's rebuke. The only deviation is in the Georgian which has the rebuke addressed to Israel!

(cf. 7:100; 8:63); most of his questions are directly concerned with theodicy, and he concludes his remarks with a complaint, not a simple question (9:14-16). In reply, the angel points out that part of the problem is the trouble introduced by Adam's sin (7:3-16), but he emphasizes that every man has had his chance (7:20-21, 72, 127-131; 9:9-12), and though the wicked do have a rough lot, their fate is deserved and is their own responsibility (7:79-87, 104-105; 8:50, 56-61; 9:9-12). In terms of quantity, God really values only the few (7:60-61; 8:1); in terms of quality of attitude, there is joy over the saved, but no grief over the lost (7:60-61, 131; 8:38, 55; 9:13). But overriding everything else is God's concern for his predetermined plan. Even when God is patient, it is not for man's sake, but "because of the times which he has determined" (7:74). From Uriel's comments, aspects of at least three rabbinic teachings emerge: (1) The Adamic fall as an explanation for man's physical woes and moral struggles (7:3-16); (2) The two-age theory, with the many wicked receiving this age as their inheritance, and the righteous few receiving the age to come as theirs (cf. 7:112-115; 8:1-3, 46ff; 9:17-22; (3) The teaching that each man is responsible for his own destiny, regardless of myriad mitigating factors (cf. 7:19-24, 105; 8:56-61; 9:7-12). Ezra's primary quarrel would appear to be with (2). He agrees that few will be saved, but thinks this is unfair, and wants an explanation. For this, Uriel has little to offer, except to affirm that few indeed will be saved (gold vs. clay parable, 7:49-61 and 8:1-3; cf. also the parable of the farmer's seed in 8:41 and the one grape/one plant homily in 9:17-22). The tension in this episode is finely balanced, for, on three occasions Uriel tries to turn Ezra from his questioning (7:15-16;

8:46ff; 9:13), but also on two occasions he compliments Ezra and tells him not to class himself among the sinners (7:76; 8:47). The content of the various Ezra speeches also fluctuates widely, for the section that is most complimentary to God (7:132-140) is sandwiched between two of Ezra's most bitter complaints (7:116-126; 8:4ff),²⁷ and his forthright appeal to God to look upon the good in Israel instead of the evil (8:26-30) is immediately followed by Ezra's heart-rending appeal to God to save those who have no store of good works (8:31-36). Although Uriel is not nearly so evasive in III, and genuinely attempts to provide explanations for at least some of Ezra's questions, it is evident from the conclusion to III that the author considers the problem unresolved, for in his last remark, Ezra is clearly unrepentant (9:14-16), and Uriel's last comment leaves the contrast between the few and many as sharp as ever: "Therefore, let the multitude perish which has been born in vain, but let my grape and my plant be saved, because with much labor I have perfected them" (9:22).

With the end of episode III, the antagonistic dialogue between Ezra and God also comes to an end. The actual transition to consolation must yet take place in episode IV, but the Ezra-God tension does not play a part in it. When the dialogue does resume at the end of IV, Ezra is no longer complaining, but is properly fearful and submissive to the divine will. It is not necessary here to trace the attitudes of the divine respondent through the remaining episodes, for the tension is gone; Ezra and the angel no longer represent opposing points of view. It would appear to be a

27. See further, chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (a).

reasonably sound conclusion, however, to say that up to the point where the tension ceases, i.e., at the end of III, the divine side of the argument fares rather badly, whether from Ezra's point of view or from the standpoint of a twentieth century evaluation! Not only is this true in terms of the content of Uriel's answers, but also with reference to those more subjective aspects which are evident in the contrasting personalities of the seer and the angel.

Turning now to II Baruch, one discovers quite a different situation. In IV Ezra, as indicated above, the fact that Ezra continually returns to the attack in episodes I-III tends to highlight both the evasiveness of the divine reply and the inadequacy of its content. In II Baruch, however, there is hardly a need for the divine respondent to be evasive. Furthermore, though the content of the divine responses in II Baruch is remarkably similar to the divine replies in IV Ezra, the inadequacy of the answers is not thrown into bold relief by the persistent questioning of the seer. In addition to the fact that Baruch is less cutting and less persistent than Ezra has been seen to be, there is another factor that has a bearing on the quality of the divine response, and that lies in the fact that in II Baruch, God is seen to maintain control of the dialogue right from the start, initiating the conversations in both episodes I and II. There is nothing really comparable in II Baruch to the vigorous dialogue so prominent in episodes I-III in IV Ezra, where Ezra returns repeatedly to drive home his searching questions. Baruch seems to prefer the longer lament over the short, sharp, dialogue (cf. II Baruch 10:6-12:4; 48:1-24; cf. also 54:1-22). Episode II appears to contain the liveliest discussion in II Baruch, but even here God clearly has

the first and last word, speaking four times in all to which Baruch responds three times. There is, however, one anomalous situation in II Baruch which perhaps needs to be accounted for, if, as is claimed here, Baruch has already capitulated in episode III, and that is the recurrence of complaint in V. There are two instances of note: 48:11-20 and 48:42-43. If the order of the text is correct as it now stands, and it may not be,²⁸ it can at least be said that Baruch returns to forthright praise without any intervening word from the divine respondent. In effect, then, Baruch is on the same side of the debate as his divine counterpart. Though he may utter a complaint, it is an oblique, rather than a frontal attack. Thus the divine respondent has no need to be evasive, nor does he have to face the sharp questioning which could expose the inadequacy of his answers. Interestingly enough, the three rabbinic teachings which began to emerge in Uriel's speeches in episode III of IV Ezra are also those that appear in II Baruch from both Baruch and God, though with some minor modifications: (1) The Adamic fall is used as an explanation for man's physical woes (God: 17:3; 23:4; 56:5-6; Baruch: 54:15), and perhaps also as a factor in moral decline (Baruch: 48:42-43).²⁹ (2) The two-age theory is employed, reserving this age for the many wicked, and the age to come for the righteous, though the stark contrast between the many and the few is missing (God: 15:7-8; 51:8ff; Baruch: 14:13; 44:7-15; 48:50). (3) Individual responsibility for personal

28. For a discussion of the problems connected with this passage, see chapter VI, A, 2, c.

29. For a more complete discussion, see chapter VI, A, 2, c.

destiny is affirmed (God: 15:5-6; 19:3; 48:40; Baruch: 54:14-15, 19; 83:4-9). The above citations are not exhaustive, but represent some of the more striking passages which contain the relevant teachings. The way in which these statements occur more or less throughout II Baruch, and from both the seer and from God is another indication of how easily the two sides of the dialogue coalesce into a common point of view. Such is not the case in IV Ezra, for there, harmony is restored primarily by changing the subject matter.³⁰ Nevertheless, the method by which the author of IV Ezra has developed the argument of this book and has accomplished the transition from pessimism to guarded optimism bears the marks of considerable skill, and will be scrutinized in detail in the chapter which follows. It will become more evident there how the elements of form and structure discussed in this chapter are essential for understanding the content of the book.

30. Though the author of IV Ezra probably intended the second part of his book to be related in some way to the first part, the general description given by Volkmar (p. 331) which emphasizes the difference between the two parts (i.e., "Theodizee" for episodes I-III and "Zukunfts-Offenbarung" for IV-VII) is not far from the truth. The author may have intended I-III to be taken as "Theodicy-problem" and IV-VII as "Theodicy" (cf. Kabisch, p. 4), but such a description lacks firm substantiation as the discussion in the ensuing chapters will indicate.

CHAPTER IV

FROM LAMENT OVER ISRAEL, TO LAMENT OVER ALL MANKIND,

TO CONSOLATION FOR ISRAEL:

THE FORM AND STRUCTURE OF IV EZRA AS THE KEY TO THE AUTHOR'S ARGUMENT

One of the leading questions in the study of IV Ezra touches on the extent of the author's universalistic tendencies. If the angel's side of the dialogue is held to be the author's predominant point of view, then the author is no universalist at all, especially when it is noted that nowhere in the book is any provision made for the salvation of the Gentiles.¹ If, on the other hand, the author's real convictions are said to appear in the mouth of Ezra, and the lack of specific mention of salvation for the Gentiles is granted only minimal recognition since it is, after all, strictly an argument from silence,² then it can be argued that the author is indeed a

1. The "notable" individuals mentioned in 3:36 may be an exception, but see below, section A, 2, d, for more complete discussion of the passage.

2. So essentially Klausner, op. cit., pp. 360, 363. See also note 17 in chapter III above.

universalist in a very broad sense, for he wishes salvation not merely for the righteous in Israel and the properly respectful among the Gentiles, but he pleads for the salvation of all mankind on the basis of the fact that every man is a creature made by God's own hands (8:7, 44).³ In the present chapter, the intention is to give full weight to the structural elements and the dialogue tension as a means of determining how the author has developed his argument. In the course of the discussion, it should be clear that the author is speaking both through Ezra and through the angel, not one or the other.⁴ One could describe the dialogue tension as the battle between the author's convictions and his feelings.⁵ Nevertheless, as the characterizations of the seer and the angel in the preceding chapter have suggested, Ezra's voice is the one that the author really wants to be heard, even though the divine arguments seem to prevail in the end. The questions raised by Ezra are never refuted, and the focus of the final chapter is almost exclusively on the person of Ezra. Further evidence for this position will be presented in the course of the discussion. It must be added, however, that if the content of the book is said to be an eruption of the author's inner struggles, it is by no means an uncontrolled eruption. Though, as

3. Keulers (p. 179) notes, however, that the author's universalism is more apparent than real since the Jewish law is the final standard of judgment.

4. The point is made by Mundle (*op. cit.*, p. 235), but Mundle himself reacts against the tendency to identify the author with Ezra's point of view, so he puts undue emphasis on Uriel's contribution to the dialogue.

5. Montefiore makes this point rather forcefully when he states: "The writer hates, and rebels against the doctrine which he feels obliged to teach" (*op. cit.*, p. 13). Thus: "The doubts and complaints he puts into his own mouth; the orthodox doctrine into the mouth of an angel" (*ibid.*, p. 14).

Violet has remarked, the author was one who had to speak, not just one who wanted to speak,⁶ he has carefully presented not only Ezra's complaints but also the transition from pessimism to guarded optimism.⁷ It would appear that the key to his argument is the development from an initial concern for Israel (the one in the hands of the many) to an intense preoccupation with all mankind (the many who will be lost as over against the few who will be saved), with a final (reluctant ?) return to a predominant concern for Israel (the one). The fascinating way in which the author shifts the focus of the book back to Israel (the one) while diminishing his concern for all mankind (the many) is centered on episode IV and will be the subject of detailed analysis below. This particular aspect of the argument of the Ezra Apocalypse directly affects the definition of the author's theodicy-problem, i.e., is he concerned primarily with the religious problem of Israel's fate among the nations, or is he really concerned about all mankind and moral evil in its broadest scope as reflected by man's apparent inability to attain the standard which God has set for him? This problem will receive particular attention in chapter V, but to a large extent, the resolution of the question depends on the way in which one interprets the author's usage

6. Violet II, p. XXXIX.

7. The intricate characteristics of the plan of IV Ezra led Gry (*op. cit.*, I, pp. XCVI-XCVII) to severely criticize Gunkel's description of the book as the reflection of the inner struggles of a distraught author. Gry felt that an author, such as Gunkel characterized him, would have been incapable of producing such an orderly piece of literature.

of the "one/many" and the "many/few" arguments throughout the seven episodes.⁸

A. The Development and Use of the One/Many and the Many/Few Arguments in Episode I

1. The Constituent Elements

The arguments for the one/many and the many/few are closely linked together in episode I. There are elements that belong clearly to one strand or to the other, but those passages noted below as ambiguous can be taken as supporting either position. As a basis for comparison, the elements of both arguments, along with the ambiguous elements are listed below with brief descriptive comments. The references are to statements by Ezra unless indicated by (U) for Uriel after the reference.

a. Elements Used to Support the One/Many Argument

- 3:2 The desolation of Zion is contrasted with the wealth of Babylon.
- 3:11 Noah is saved from among the many who were destroyed at the flood.
- 3:13 Abraham is chosen from among the many ungodly.
- 3:15-16 Jacob is chosen and Esau rejected.
- 3:17-19 The law is given to the descendants of Jacob.

8. In the discussion that follows, "one/many" is used as a shorthand symbol to refer to Ezra's complaint that Israel (the one) has been handed over to the many. Similarly, "many/few" is used as a symbol to refer to Ezra's complaint that many will be lost but so few will be saved. From this primary usage of the terms, a further extension is quite natural, so that "one/many" can be used simply to refer to aspects of the discussion which concern Israel the nation. Likewise, "many/few" can be used in the discussion to refer to aspects dealing with all mankind, i.e., universalistic concerns.

- 3:22 The law and the evil root are together in the heart of the people (Israel).
- 3:23 David is chosen after many years (of evil).
- 3:27 The city (of David) is delivered into the hands of God's enemies.
- 3:28-34 By comparison, Israel is no worse than Babylon, yet is ruled by her.
- 5:3 (U) The time will come when the land now ruling will be laid waste.
- 5:16-18 (Phaltiel's intervention for the people) Why has Ezra forsaken Israel, the people specially entrusted to him?

b. Ambiguous Elements: May Support either Argument

- 3:35-36 By comparison (?), Israel has obeyed better than Babylon,⁹ but in actual fact, no nation has obeyed, only individuals.
- 4:12 It would be better not to exist than to live in ungodliness, suffer, and not understand why.
- 4:22-25 Why was the power of understanding given to man if it was not designed to help him comprehend problems of everyday life, such as: why Israel is given over to the Gentiles, why the law is made of no effect, and why man passes from the world like the locusts and is not worthy to obtain mercy? What does God plan to do for his name by which Israel is called?

9. This is the sense given by both the RSV and the NEB, but see discussion below under A, 2, d.

c. Elements Used to Support the Many/Few Argument

- 3:4-7 God himself formed Adam and gave him one command; but Adam sinned, so death came upon him and all his descendants.
- 3:8-10 Every nation rebelled against God, and God did not hinder them; but finally the same fate overtook them as overtook Adam.
- 3:21 Adam and all his descendants were burdened with the evil heart, so they transgressed and were overcome.
- 3:25-26 The inhabitants of Jerusalem sinned just as Adam and all his descendants for they all had the same evil heart.
- 3:35a When have the inhabitants of the earth not sinned in God's eyes?
- 4:4 (U) Ezra will be shown that which he desires to know, namely, why¹⁰ the heart is evil.
- 4:30-32 (U) If the one grain of evil sown in Adam brought so much evil, when so many good¹¹ seeds are sown, how great will be the harvest.
- 4:34 (U) Ezra hastens for himself, but the Most High hastens for many.
- 4:38-39 All of "us" are full of ungodliness. Perhaps the sins of those who inhabit the earth delay the consummation for the righteous.
- 4:40-43 (U) Hades is like the womb: when it is time for birth, the child must be born; so the souls in Hades must come forth at the proper time.

10. Latin (SACM), Syriac, Ethiopic, but see further note 22 below.

11. "Good" is included by the Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, Ar-1, but is omitted by the Latin and Ar-2. See further under A, 2, c, below.

2. The Author's Argument

a. The Function of Chapter 3 in the Author's Plan

As is evident from the listing of the elements above, a large number of the passages of interest occur in Ezra's introductory prayer which occupies the whole of chapter 3. Before the specific arguments and the ambiguous passages are discussed, it is necessary first to say a few words with regard to the intent of this prayer. Is Ezra simply lamenting Israel's condition? Is he lamenting the condition of mankind as a whole? Or is he also appealing to God to save man in spite of the fact that man does not deserve it? As the citations from chapter 3 above have suggested, Ezra seems to be concerned not only about Israel, but is concerned about all mankind as well, though his interest in Israel probably predominates in this initial chapter. The way in which the author alternately describes God's saving acts of election and the massive outbreaks of sin, suggests that the author is in reality appealing to God for salvation in spite of man's poor performance to date. In this respect, chapter 3 belongs more to that tradition of lament psalms in which the suppliant stresses his (or the community's) guilt, and on that basis appeals to God for mercy, rather than to the tradition in which the psalmist appeals to God for salvation because of his (or the community's) innocence.¹² Ezra would perhaps go so far as to appeal to the quality of

12. Examples of the former type (Busspsalmen, Busslieder) are Pss. 51, 130. Examples of the latter (Unschuldpsalmen, Unschuldslieder) are Pss. 5, 7, 17, 26. The terminology for classifying the various "Gattungen" has been established by the monumental work of Hermann Gunkel. Two of his best known works in this area are Die Psalmen (HAT), 4th ed., Göttingen, 1926, and Einleitung in die Psalmen: Die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels, 2nd ed., Göttingen, 1966, the latter being brought to completion by J. Begrich. The impact of Gunkel's work has been outlined by Herbert F. Hahn in The Old

Israel's faith as a reason for her being delivered, and in that respect paralleling the sentiments of Ps. 22:5-6 (EVV 4-5) (individual lament), but he would certainly not go so far as Ps. 44:18-19 (EVV 17-18) (communal lament) which claims that Israel has not forgotten God nor been false to his covenant.¹³ Ezra is very chary about ascribing any sort of merit to God's people.¹⁴ What he does claim is that Israel is less guilty than

Testament in Modern Research, expanded edition with revised bibliographical essay by Horace D. Hummel, Philadelphia, 1970, pp. 127ff. Gunkel's influence is also very much in evidence in A. R. Johnson's essay "The Psalms", in The Old Testament and Modern Study, ed. H. H. Rowley, Oxford, 1961, pp. 162-209. For the classification of the Psalms referred to in the above discussion, reference has been made primarily to Johnson's essay noted above and to G. W. Anderson's contribution on the Psalms in Peake's Commentary on the Bible, ed. Matthew Black and H. H. Rowley, revised edition, London, 1962, pp. 409-443. It should be noted also that Interpretation has recently devoted a full issue to the biblical "lament" (Vol. 28, No. 1 [January, 1974]) with helpful essays by Walter Brueggemann, Claus Westermann, John Bright, and others. More specifically on IV Ezra, Harnisch (pp. 20-23) has an excursus dealing with the "Volksklagelieder" in IV Ezra.

13. It is noteworthy that Harnisch (p. 20f) has neglected to mention this aspect in his discussion of Ps. 44. Although Ps. 44 and the other similar "Volksklagelieder" which Harnisch cites (Pss. 74, 80, 85, 89) do resemble the laments of IV Ezra insofar as they include a review of God's past acts for his people, they do not record the saving acts of God against a backdrop of human rebellion as is the case in IV Ezra 3, and this represents a significant difference. Harnisch (pp. 22-23) tries to establish that the laments of IV Ezra are no longer prayers: "Sie wird zur radikalen Anklage Gottes, dessen Macht sich in den Augen des Redenden als äusserst fragwürdig darstellt." Harnisch is correct in noting that in IV Ezra 3:4-27, the distinction between the "Geschichtsüberblick" and the "Klage" has been blurred since the element of complaint has already crept into the review of God's saving acts (p. 23), but on balance, the complaint in IV Ezra 3 is really no more biting than that of Ps. 44, and perhaps it is even less so. Furthermore, as Walter Brueggemann has noted in connection with Ps. 44 ("From Hurt to Joy, From Death to Life," Interpretation 28 [1974], p. 12): "But even when such an accusatory tone is employed, it is clear that the lament is an act of faith, for only Yahweh who caused the trouble can right the wrong." This would appear to be precisely the case in IV Ezra 3, even though the lament form it represents is a later development from the cultic lament psalms of the OT.

14. For a more complete discussion of this aspect, see chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (a).

Babylon. Injustice is done when the latter rules over the former inasmuch as Babylon is the more wicked of the two.

There are two types of arguments used in the Psalms that seem to offer parallels to IV Ezra 3. First, there are those psalms which claim God's mercy because man is simply a frail creature of dust in the presence of the almighty Creator (e.g., Ps. 103:14-15; 78:39).¹⁵ Second, there are the psalms, which, on the one hand emphasize man's repeated disobedience, but then, on the other hand, God's continual readiness to forgive and restore. Of this latter type, Pss. 78, 106, and 107¹⁶ all offer striking parallels to the arguments used in IV Ezra 3. Ps. 78, for example, gives a brief survey of Israel's history from the giving of the law (78:5) to the selection of the tribe of Judah (78:68) and David as her king (78:70). In between, the psalmist relates the recurring outbreaks of rebellion (78:10, 17, 32, 40, 56) followed by judgment and then God's saving acts for his people. Ps. 106 puts rather more emphasis on the rebellion of God's people, tracing the sins of Israel from the time when they were in Egypt (106:6-7) through

15. This type of appeal is not restricted to a particular "Gattung", but is rather an argument which could be used with several different "Gattungen". For example, Ps. 78, "a didactic poem seeking to apply the lessons of Israel's history" (Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 429), is a "Lobpsalm" which includes a Wisdom-style introduction (see further Claus Westermann, *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen*, 3rd ed., Göttingen, 1963, p. 106). According to Gunkel's classification, Ps. 78 is one of the "Mischungen" or "Mischgedichte" which uses a mixture of types (Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 180). It should be noted here that the motive for referring to man's frailty in the OT is generally quite different from that which is apparent in IV Ezra. See further, section 2, b, below.

16. Again, this type of argument is not restricted to a specific "Gattung". Ps. 107 is a "mixed poem" just as is Ps. 78 (*ibid.*). Ps. 106 is a communal lament, though somewhat free as far as form is concerned (*ibid.*, p. 167).

the wilderness wandering (106:13-39), and their entrance into Canaan when they failed to destroy the peoples of Canaan (106:34-39). God's judgment against them is described (106:40-42), but in spite of their numerous rebellions, God has repeatedly delivered them (106:43-46); accordingly, the psalmist appeals to God to deliver his people from among the nations (106:47), and concludes with a final word of praise (106:48). The entire psalm is really a record of God's grace in spite of rebellion, which is just what Ezra seems to be pleading for in chapter 3. Ps. 107 is more symmetrical in its distress-cry-deliverance sequence and also seems to emphasize God's saving power more than does Ps. 106. The psalm records various situations of distress, both deserved and undeserved. After each incident, the refrain follows: "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress" (Ps. 107:6, 13, 19, 28). Judgment is declared (107:33-34), but again the psalmist concludes with a word of praise for God's goodness and his saving acts (107:35-43). In each of these psalms (78, 106, 107) there is a final note of confidence or praise. Only Ps. 106, however, includes an explicit appeal (106:47), and that is a very brief one. In IV Ezra, it would appear that the author has adopted a similar scheme by placing after each instance of rebellion the record of God's saving act: the ante-diluvian rebellion, but the salvation of Noah; the post-diluvian rebellion, but the choosing of Abraham and his seed; the post-Sinai rebellion, but the selection of David, and the building of his city and temple. Now the question is: in this present situation, why cannot God act as he has done before?¹⁷ Though the question of the increase of sin since Adam must be dealt

17. Harnisch refers briefly to Pss. 78 and 106 in a note on page 32, but he rejects any possible parallel with IV Ezra on the basis that the seer strongly disputes that Israel can be held responsible for her sin. That would seem to

with separately,¹⁸ it may be significant that Ezra's last word before the appeal is that this last rebellion is no worse than the first: "In everything, they acted just like Adam and all his descendants, for they also had the evil heart" (3:26).¹⁹ Thus while Ezra bases his appeal for mercy on God's gracious acts for his people in the past in the same way as do the psalms mentioned above, his prayer differs significantly in its conclusion, for it lacks the tone of confidence and omits the word of praise.²⁰ The fact that Ezra's appeal is predominantly linked with God's actions for his own people would suggest that Ezra's primary concern is for Israel, but the way in which he repeatedly refers to Adam, and claims that the problem began with the very first man indicates that Ezra has broadened his horizons and is in distress

be an argument ex hypothesi rather than one dictated by the evidence from IV Ezra. For further discussion of the aspect of human responsibility for sin in IV Ezra, see chapter VI, A, 1, below.

18. See chapter V, A, 5.

19. The Syriac emphasizes the aspect of sameness even more: "And they did nothing new (ܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܢ) beyond that which Adam and all his descendants had done." Surprisingly, this reading is supported by the Georgian: "nihil novius fecerunt".

20. Harnisch (p. 23) has perhaps overstated his case when he claims that the review of God's past action can no longer be taken (in IV Ezra) as a "Vertrauensäusserung", but rather "als Material bzw. als Argumente der Anklage". No matter how sharp the complaint, the very fact that God is addressed implies that there is a slender thread of hope that he might yet act for his people. Even the bitter individual lament, Ps. 88, for all the doubt and feeling of rejection which it projects, stands as a monument to the faith of one who could still appeal to God in spite of the frightful situation in which he found himself. As Westermann has said ("The Role of Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament," Interpretation 28 [1974], p. 31): "Even he who despairs of God is within range of God's ear."

over the gloomy prospects for mankind in general. This tendency to begin with Israel's problems, but subsequently to indicate concern for all mankind is a pattern which is evident through the first three episodes, but progressively less attention is paid to Israel, and more to the fate of all mankind so that episode III gives the impression that the destiny of the human race has virtually eclipsed more strictly Jewish concerns as the seer's most pressing problem. This progression should become clear in the discussion that follows.

b. Analysis of Specific Elements of the One/Many and the Many/Few Arguments

With reference to the specific elements that make up the one/many and the many/few arguments, it would appear that the one/many contrast tends to prevail over the many/few in episode I. The explicit statements which contrast Israel with Babylon (3:2, 28) and the references to God's acts of election for his people (Abraham, Sinai, David), would seem to justify Crenshaw's statement that IV Ezra is dealing with the religious problem of Israel among the nations.²¹ In addition, the eschatological excursus by Uriel (4:52-5:13) contains the explicit statement that the land that is now ruling will be waste and untrodden (5:3). Finally, Phaltiel's intervention on the part of the people (5:16-18) is a reminder that Ezra's first concern should be for Israel. Nevertheless, the passages cited above under "many/few" point to a parallel concern about the destiny of all mankind. The

21. Crenshaw, op. cit., p. 387.

The four distinct references to Adam as the starting point of sin (3:7, 10, 21, 26) have already been mentioned, but in addition, chapter 4 adds another facet to the discussion by sharply delineating the gulf between man (not just Israel) and God. Uriel promises, first of all, to show Ezra why the heart is evil (4:4).²² Then he proceeds to impress upon Ezra that man, frail creature that he is, cannot hope to understand the things of God. This is emphasized by the three impossible questions (4:5ff), and the parable of the sea and the forest (4:13ff). The result is a two-pole tension: man vs. God, whereas in the one/many argument, there are initially three poles: Israel vs. Babylon vs. God.²³ Yet there remains a certain fluidity in chapter 4 and a fluctuation between the one/many and the many/few arguments. Two of the passages listed above as ambiguous (4:12, 22-25), when taken in

22. Gunkel, Box, Oesterley, and Myers all seek to establish the reading of "Whence comes the evil heart" or something similar, instead of "Why the heart is evil". The major Latin MSS (SACM) all support "quare" as do the Syriac and Ethiopic. Violet I lists no variants at all, but BJ gives the alternate reading of "unde sit", citing "Sab" for support. BJ does not specifically identify this symbol, but it probably refers to Sabatier's *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae* (Rheims, 1743-1749) which is mentioned in James' introduction to BJ, p. xii. This is confirmed by Myers (p. 162) who uses a rather strange symbol (S^{a,b}), though in his notes on page 172, he further confuses the issue by inferring that "unde sit" is the reading of "the S manuscript". Box (p. 21) cites "the Vulgate and one codex" in support of "unde sit". According to Oesterley (pp. 31-32) and Myers (p. 172), Ezra's question concerns the origins of evil, not the reason for the evil heart. Apart from the flimsy MSS evidence for "unde sit", it would actually seem that "whence" the evil heart is not as appropriate as "why" the evil heart. Ezra knows where the evil heart came from, at least the rabbis who elaborate on the evil heart knew where it came from—it came from God! So Ezra wants to know why. As far as Uriel's reply is concerned, he answers neither question. For further comment on the problems of linking this verse with the context, see A, 2, d, below in the present chapter. For further comment on the evil heart, see chapter VI, A, 4.

23. These three poles should, in theory, ultimately resolve into a two-pole tension with God joining Israel against Babylon. In the many/few argument, one could almost say it is Israel and Babylon against God!

conjunction with chapter 3, fit reasonably enough within the one/many argument, but when taken in conjunction with the more immediate context, namely, the comments of Uriel, they seem to shade into a lament for the fate of all mankind as well. In 4:12, Ezra laments that "we" must live in ungodliness, suffer, and not understand why. That could very easily apply to Israel, but the point at issue is the ineffectiveness of human comprehension in the face of God's dealings with man--certainly a universal concern. The references to Israel in 4:22-25 are more explicit: Israel vs. the Gentiles, the beloved people vs. the godless tribes, the ineffectiveness of the law and the written covenants, and the final query as to what God will do for his name by which "we" are called. But again the immediate context gives a universal slant to this lament by suggesting the inadequacy of human understanding in the face of everyday problems. Furthermore, while the problems noted above are of concern to Israel in particular, verse 24 points to aspects of the human dilemma which involve every man: we pass from the world like locusts and our life is like a mist, and we are not worthy to obtain mercy. Admittedly, the emphasis on man's creaturely status can be applied for sectarian purposes as well as universalistic ones, but the particular usage depends to a large degree on whether the author is sceptical or confident. Many OT passages (cf. Ps. 78:39; 103:14-15; 144:3-4; Is. 64:5, 7 [EVV 6, 8]) and in addition the psalms in IQH from Qumran dwell on man's frailty, but from a motive quite different from that of the author of IV Ezra. Rather than implying an attitude of despair because the gulf between God and man is too vast to be bridged, the above passages consider it a marvel of faith that God would stoop to save such transient creatures of dust. In IV Ezra, man's weakness cannot be linked with praise for God's gracious acts,

for the author is not at all sure of the destiny that awaits man. In this respect IV Ezra is much closer to Qoheleth (3:18-22; 4:1-3) and Job (3:11, 16) in doubting whether the life of man is at all worthwhile, given the conditions of his existence.²⁴ But, as in the case of Job, it would be unfair to judge the attitude of the author on the basis of individual statements when the over-all structure is essential to the meaning of the book. So while Ezra may be pessimistic in the early episodes, the author has not yet spoken his last word.

Most of the relevant material which remains in episode I can be discussed in connection with two problems, both of which have a significant bearing on the interpretation of the first episode. First, there is the unusual passage where Uriel seems to take the "many" side of the many/few argument (4:34). Second, the function of 3:35-36 as a transitional element between chapters 3 and 4 needs to be discussed.

24. Harnisch (p. 23) notes the opinion of Westermann that IV Ezra offers a close parallel to the book of Job, with the main difference being the concern for the nation rather than the individual. The death-wish which Ezra expresses in a variety of ways (4:12; 5:35; 7:62ff, 116ff; cf. also 10:4, 18) stands within a solid tradition of Jewish pessimism. The same thought is expressed in the OT in Job 3:1-26, where the poet permits Job to curse, at some length, the day of his birth. It is also found in Eccles. 4:3; 7:1 and in Jeremiah 15:10; 20:14. In the intertestamental literature, the sentiment is expressed by Mattathias in I Macc. 2:7, and it occurs in I Enoch 38:2, II Enoch 41:2 and II Baruch 3:1f; 10:6. Moore II (p. 285) refers to the lengthy discussion between the schools of Shammai and Hillel as to whether it would have been better if man had never been created. According to Erubin 13b, which Moore cites, the former held that it would have been better not to have been created, but the latter disagreed. According to Moore, it was finally decided that it would have been better if man had not been created, but "inasmuch as he has been created, he must closely scrutinize his doings" (Moore I, loc. cit.).

c. Uriel as the Spokesman for the Many

There appears to be only one instance in the first three episodes where Uriel speaks specifically for the many, instead of for the few, and that is in 4:34. This is sufficiently unusual that it requires a more careful scrutiny, and in particular, a study of the context in which it occurs.

In response to Ezra's complaint in 4:22-25, Uriel states that this age is hastening to an end, and cannot bring the reward promised to the righteous (4:26-27). There must be a delay, however, before the righteous can inherit the age to come, for though the evil has been sown, the harvest has not yet come. Until the evil is harvested, the field where the good has been sown cannot come (4:28-29). The next three verses (4:30-32) form a more-or-less homogeneous unit of thought which can be interpreted in either of two rather different ways, depending on whether one follows the Latin MSS and Ar-2, or the Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Ar-1. The latter group all include the adjective "good" in the phrase "good seed".²⁵ This is accepted by the NEB. The Latin and Ar-2 omit the adjective, as does the RSV in its translation. The difference in meaning is considerable, for if one follows the NEB, then the contrast is between the evil of this age, great as it is, and the much greater abundance of good which will be present in the age to come. If, however, one follows the RSV, then the comparison falls within this evil age: whatever evil there may have been up to the present will be insignificant in comparison to the evils of the last days. Box prefers to retain the

25. "Good seed" is taken as an idiomatic equivalent for ܟܕܝܫܐ ܕܡܝܪܝܬܐ , literally: "ears of the good". Myers (p. 165) erroneously cites Ar-2 instead of Ar-1 as supporting the inclusion of the adjective "good".

adjective on the grounds that the present evil age is on the point of closing.²⁶ Presumably, he would say that the author views the end as so imminent that there would not be time for an even greater harvest of evil before the end. But in at least three of the eschatological excurses by Uriel (5:1-12; 6:24; 9:3-4), there are definite indications that in the time just preceding the advent of the Messiah, the turmoil on earth would become even worse. This is even more explicitly stated in a divine response in 14:16-18. So Box's argument for the retention of the "good" would appear to be inadequate. Nevertheless, there does appear to be good reason for retaining the adjective on the basis of the logic of the argument which begins in 4:26. In verses 26-29, there is a comparison, both implicit and explicit, of the two ages. It would be natural to expect some aspect of the age to come to be mentioned in 30-32, especially since the dialogue which begins in 4:33 seems to be dependent on a slender thread of hope. Ezra asks first: "How long, and when will these things be?"²⁷ This is followed by a second, more pessimistic

26. Box, p. 32. The argument suggested in the text would not be accepted by Box because 4:26ff is from S, who presumably knows nothing of messianic woes. Harnisch, p. 170f, accepts the reading "good" and argues that the angel is using a Qal wa-Homer argument, i.e., the harvest from the evil seed pales into insignificance when compared with the bounties which will result from the many good seeds. Peter Hayman has called the writer's attention to the fact that the appeal to the Qal wa-Homer argument is neutral as far as determining the validity of "good" is concerned. Whether one argues "one evil seed/many evil seeds" or "one evil seed/many good seeds", it is still an argument a minori ad maius. Retaining the "good" does fit Harnisch's hypothesis, however, since it allows the angel to put the emphasis on the joys of the age to come, leaving Ezra as the chief proponent of the pessimistic outlook.

27. With the Syriac which reads: ܐܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܙܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ. BJ conjectures "usquequo", noting the comparison of the Syr., Eth., Ar-1 and Armenian in the notes. Violet I gives "quo" (SA); "ubi" is the reading of CM.

question: "Why²⁸ are our years few and evil?" In his reply, Uriel apparently chooses to ignore the more pessimistic second question, commenting rather on the first one by referring to the impatience of the righteous who are waiting for their reward (4:35-37). Ezra's thoughts are still on the age to come when he suggests in 4:39 that the time of reward for the righteous is delayed by the sins of those who are on the earth. All of these hints of hope from 4:33-39, tenuous though they may be, suggest that Uriel's last comment in 4:32 is a positive one about the age to come, rather than a negative one referring to the last frightful agony just before the Messiah comes. Ezra is certainly capable of more dramatic outbursts than the one that appears here after 4:32 (cf. 4:12; 5:35; 7:62-69, 116-126), and though the vigor of Ezra's response is not always directly proportional to the unattractiveness of Uriel's comments, there is a strong tendency in that direction. But the clearest evidence for retention of the "good" in 4:32 is the statement in 4:30 to the effect that the single seed in Adam's heart has produced much evil up to the present, and will continue to do so right up to the time of threshing. From this it would appear that there should be no need for a further massive sowing of evil seed--the single evil seed sown in Adam is sufficient cause for all the evil that will occur on the earth until the new age dawns. NEB nicely ties the argument together in its translation of 4:31-32: "Reckon this up: if one grain of evil seed has produced so great a crop of godlessness, how vast a harvest will there be when good seeds beyond number have been sown!" With a translation such as that given by NEB, 4:26-32 produces a much more balanced discussion of the two ages, giving

28. The Latin reads "quare", but the Syriac eliminates the question: "Because (ܐܢܝܢܐ) our years are few and evil."

proper emphasis to the age to come, and thus accounting for the glimmer of hope in the dialogue that follows.

Now, if the "good" is retained in 4:32 as suggested above, then when 4:26-32 is linked with 4:34 by means of the continuing dialogue, Uriel apparently emerges as the spokesman for the many (in the age to come [?]), while accusing Ezra of speaking only for himself. This is such an atypical argument for Uriel that it requires at least an attempted analysis of its function in the structure of the book. Uriel's normal argument is that this age is for the many, and the next age is for the few (cf. 7:20, 60-61; 8:1-3, 55; 9:22). Why, then, does he appear to change sides here? First of all, it must be said that, properly speaking, Uriel has not crossed over to the other side, for this is the first definite mooted of the two-age theory as the solution to the problems which Ezra has raised. It would be more accurate to say that subsequent to this first attempt to argue for the many, Uriel recognizes the cogency of Ezra's questions and recasts his arguments to defend the justice of the position which Ezra is attacking, namely, that the new age is only for the few. Secondly, Uriel may not be arguing quite so strongly for the many over against the few as would appear at first glance. Both 4:32 and 34 employ a quantitative comparison, which, when linked together in dialogue form, tend to imply that "seeds without number" (4:32) are parallel to the "many" of 4:34. But the question of just what is being compared in 4:26-32 needs to be looked at more closely.

Looking first at the evil seed and its harvest, one could ask if this represents evil men, since the evil seed is sown in the heart of man, or if it simply represents the quantity and quality of evil. On balance, the more

abstract and impersonal aspect seems preferable. Uriel speaks of the evil which has been sown (4:28-30), and which must be harvested (4:28) before the field where the good has been sown will appear (4:29). Now in what sense is evil to be understood: quantitatively or qualitatively, or both? The analogy with the seed would suggest that it is at least quantitative, but it is not so easy to decide whether or not the author meant to convey the idea that evil would become worse in a qualitative sense as the evil age draws to a close.²⁹ In Ezra's introductory prayer of chapter 3, the author suggests that evil had increased with the passage of time: the post-diluvians became "more ungodly" than their ancestors (3:12); but the predominant emphasis there seems to be on the fact that sin was bad enough from the very first, for those who were finally captured in the destruction of Jerusalem sinned "just as Adam and all his descendants" (3:26), i.e., the sin at the end was no worse than at the first (cf. 3:10, 21). If this can properly be said to be the author's emphasis, then "evil" in 4:26-32 would probably be both quantitative and qualitative just as ten identical lashes of the whip produce an effect which is more intense qualitatively than a single lash, though strictly speaking, the increase has simply been quantitative. So it is with the evil in the world, though the increase has been quantitative, the result has been qualitative as well. It would appear, however, that even if the increasing evil were to be linked with increasing population (a point which is not explicit in 4:26-32, and may not even be implied), the analogy with the "good" would break down at that point, for in

29. On the whole question of the increase of evil, see further chapter V, A, 5.

4:29 Uriel states that the field of the coming age has already been sown with the good. That strongly implies, when taken together with 4:32, that the good seeds and the abundant harvest refer to the many blessings, material and otherwise, which will accrue to the righteous in the age to come and which contrast with the physical and moral evils of the present age. Here again, increase in quantity may also mean an increase in quality, but in any event, the "many" or "much" spoken of in 4:32 when taken in its context of 4:26-32 could hardly refer to the many who will be saved. Whether or not the author intended the "many" of 4:34 to be directly linked with the preceding "good and evil seed" parable in 4:26-32 is debatable. Close analysis indicate that there can be no real connection, but the dialogue form still leaves the impression that the "many" about whom Uriel is speaking are the righteous who will inherit the age to come.

Another way in which the "many" of 4:34 could be understood would be to apply it to God's haste on behalf of all men, both those who will be saved and those who are destined to perish.³⁰ But unless the author is quite inconsistent, (and that is entirely possible), this would appear to be excluded by other statements from Uriel, the most explicit statement being in 8:38-39 where he claims that God will not concern himself about the fashioning of those who have sinned, nor about their death, judgment, or destruction, but will rejoice over the righteous.

30. This is the view of Box, who suggests a comparison with 5:33 (p.33). In other words, many = all. But "all" would have been easy enough for the author to say if that is what he meant.

Perhaps the best solution to the meaning of "many" in 4:34 is to define it neither as an integral part of the many/few argument nor as a reference to all men, but as a reference to the "many" righteous who are yet to come before the consummation actually takes place. Uriel seems to be inferring that Ezra's haste to get this evil age over and done with could exclude from the future age some of the good seed yet to be sown. The differing viewpoints of Ezra and Uriel are brought out by the parallelism between 4:33-34 and 4:35-37. Ezra's haste in 4:33 is parallel to the haste of the souls of the righteous in their chambers who are anxious for their reward (4:35), while Uriel's mild rebuke to Ezra in 4:34 is parallel to Jeremiel's plea for patience to the souls in their chambers (4:36-37). Thus, the "many" here would actually be part of the "few" when seen against the backdrop of the whole of mankind, but "many" is still an appropriate term in view of the considerable number of the "saved" who are yet to come before the dawn of the new age.³¹ Nevertheless, it remains unusual that Uriel would argue for "many" in any sense of the term, and it should be noted that even if the "many" here are part of the "few" when seen in the context of the whole book, it may be significant that Uriel's comments are followed by Ezra's abrupt rejoinder that there simply

31. The writer is indebted to Peter Hayman for the observation about the parallelism between 4:33-34 and 4:35-37 and the light that is thereby shed on the meaning of "many" in 4:34. Hayman has also suggested that this particular passage is part of the author's theodicy and fits in well with the post-A.D. 70 situation and the need to curtail the enthusiasm of the zealots. The author is telling his readers that the end will come, but that they must not be too selfish in wanting it to come right away--the consummation will come in God's own time. This more cautious expectation of the end-time is also mirrored in episode seven where Ezra is the mediator of the law and seems to be preparing the people for a more lengthy stay in the present evil age.

are not "many" who are going to inherit the coming age--but "all of us are full of ungodliness..." (4:38). At any rate, Uriel does not again attempt to speak for the "many", but proceeds to remind Ezra of the gulf that exists between the ways of God and those of man. In response to Ezra's question as to whether human sin can delay the consummation (4:39), Uriel says that it cannot. Comparing the chambers of souls in Hades to the womb, he says that when the time comes for the child to be born, nothing can prevent it. So it is with the chambers who are hastening to give back the things entrusted to them (4:40-42). The fact that human sin cannot delay the consummation would come as good news to Ezra if he were confident that the consummation would bring blessings to man instead of torment. But Ezra shows very little evidence of such confidence, so the effect of Uriel's argument is again to drive a wedge between God and man in much the same way as was done earlier on in chapter 4. But here Uriel is not emphasizing man's inability to comprehend divine ways, but rather that man's activity cannot touch the divine plan for the world. Though this does not represent a formal return to the "few" side of the many/few debate, it does represent a return to the two-pole tension of man vs. God out of which the many/few argument issues.

There remains one final problem in episode I, and that involves the link between chapters 3 and 4. Since this particular problem is an important factor in establishing the proper relationship between the one/many and the many/few arguments in I, the discussion of it has been reserved until the other elements from both the one/many and the many/few arguments could form the proper background for the resolution of the problem.

d. Function of 3:35-36 as the Transitional Element between Chapters 3 and 4

One of the more startling statements in IV Ezra is the one in 3:36 which implies that exceptional individuals among the Gentiles have kept God's law. Most expositors have taken the view that 3:36 does indeed refer to the Gentiles.³² That position is based on the assumption that verses 35 and 36 continue the comparison of Zion and Babylon which begins with verse 28. Though this is the most obvious interpretation of the better versions,³³ there are a sufficient number of problems connected with it to suggest that the reference is rather to exceptional men among all mankind, whether Jew or Gentile. This suggestion is based on the hypothesis that verses 35 and 36 ought to be considered as a more-or-less clearly defined conclusion to the whole prayer, rather than merely as a continuation of the comparison between Zion and Babylon in 3:28-34. There are four aspects to the problem:

- i. The relationship of chapter 3 with chapter 4 and in particular 4:4;
- ii. Usage of the terms "world" and "earth" in 3:34-35;
- iii. The comparative

32. Rosenthal (p. 42, note 1) thinks that these exceptional men are proselytes, as does Box (pp. 19-20). Volkmar (pp. 11-12) notes that the Ethiopic and Arabic (=Ar-1) versions eliminated the idea of exceptional meritorious individuals because of Christian theological bias. Harnisch (p. 37) understands these "few" to be from among the heathen. Myers (p. 172), on the other hand, by citing Ezek. 14:14, 20 (Noah, Daniel, and Job), infers that they are Israelites, though he does not comment on the status of Job who was considered to be a non-Jew by some of the rabbis, but not by all (so Box, p. 19).

33. The RSV of 3:35b reads: "Or what nation has kept thy commandments so well?" The "so well" represents the Latin "sic" or its equivalent in the Syriac, Ethiopic and Arabic-1. The Ar-2, Arm, and Georgian simply read (with slight variations): "What nation has kept your commandments?"

sense, stated or implied in 3:35b; iv. Singular or plural for "people" in 3:36. These aspects will be taken up in order below.

i. Relationship of Chapter 3 to 4:4. As has been stated previously, strands of both the one/many argument and the many/few argument are woven into chapter 3. If the prayer concludes with an explicit contrast between Zion and Babylon, then there is not a smooth transition with what follows, for Uriel states that he is going to show Ezra what he desires to see: "Why³⁴ the heart is evil" (4:4). The evil heart, stemming from creation, is a problem afflicting all mankind, and Ezra refers to it four times in his prayer (3:20, 21, 22, 26),³⁵ but if he concludes his prayer with simply a parochial complaint about Israel's fate among the nations, Uriel's "summary" of Ezra's problem in 4:4 is hardly apropos. If, however, 3:35-36 can be understood as a general lament about man in general, then it can also serve to unite the concern about Israel and the concern about man in a summary statement which thereby provides a much more logical and natural link with chapter 4. But in order to make this solution feasible, the other related problems must be appropriately resolved.

ii. Usage of "World" and "Earth" in 3:34-35. Both the RSV and the NEB use "world" in 3:34 and "earth" in 35. This is based on the Latin text which has "qui habitant in saeculo" for 3:34 and "qui habitant terram" in

34. Latin "quare", but see note 22 above.

35. The evil heart and evil root are taken here as synonymous. See full discussion in chapter VI, A, 4, a.

3:35. The Syriac has "world" (ܠܡܕܢܐ) in both instances.³⁶ If there actually were two terms in the Hebrew Vorlage, they would probably have been ִּלְיוֹלָם for "saeculum" and ָאָרֶץ for "terram". Harnisch, in connection with his thorough discussion of the term "saeculum" (ܠܡܕܢܐ) and its equivalents, has dealt both with the phrase "inhabitants of the world" and with "inhabitants of the earth".³⁷ While both phrases can be used to refer to the whole of mankind,³⁸ and the versions sometimes do not agree among themselves as to which phrase belongs in a specific context,³⁹ Harnisch concludes that the terms cannot simply be assumed to be interchangeable.⁴⁰ The present context is a good case in point, for if it was the author's intention to distinguish between the meaning of "inhabitants of the world" (3:34), and that of "inhabitants of the earth" (3:35), it would have been easier from a terminological point of view to class the Gentiles as "inhabitants of the

36. In addition to the Latin, the Georgian, Ar-2, and Arm. also distinguish between the terms of "world" in 3:34 and "earth" in 3:35. The Ethiopic agrees with the Syriac in having the same term in both places. Ar-1 omits both occurrences.

37. See Harnisch (pp. 90-106) for the section entitled: "Der Begriff 'Olam' und seine Verwendung in 4Esr und sBar (Semasiologische Voruntersuchung)". The discussion of the phrase "inhabitants of the world" is on pp. 102-103, and that dealing with the phrase "inhabitants of the earth" is on p. 104.

38. As examples of "inhabitants of the world" (or an equivalent phrase) referring to all mankind, the following passages may be cited: 3:9; 7:74; 7:137; 14:20. For "inhabitants of the earth" (or an equivalent phrase), the following passages may be noted: 3:12; 4:21, 39; 5:1, 6; 6:18, 24; 7:72; 10:59; 11:5; 32, 34; 12:23f; 13:29f.

39. Harnisch (p. 104) notes that in 3:35; 4:39; 6:26; 13:29 where the Latin reads "inhabitants of the earth", some of the versions have "inhabitants of the world", but he is of the opinion that the versions are much too inconsistent to allow precise evaluation of terminology.

40. Ibid.

world" and all mankind as "inhabitants of the earth" than vice versa. First, with reference to the term "world" (saeculum/ עולם / עולמות), there arises a certain ambiguity, for when it designates the present age (עולם הזה), it ^{acquires}~~carries~~ a definite negative connotation; but, when it signifies the age to come (עולם הבא), it carries a very positive connotation. Accordingly, when the term occurs alone (i.e., without qualifying adjectives or in a neutral context), it tends to retain its ambiguity. On the other hand, the Latin "saeculum" has picked up a slightly negative nuance, at least from a religious point of view, as is evident in the English derivative "secular".⁴¹ In other words, that which is secular is not religious--therefore, it is a part of the present (evil) age. But with reference to "earth", there is not the same potential for a negative connotation, at least not from the biblical point of view.⁴² The influence of Genesis 1 looms large: God created the heavens and the earth (1:1), and

41. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, A Latin Dictionary, Oxford 1879, p. 1614, in their entry for "saeculum", note the following usages for ecclesiastical Latin: "worldliness" (II,C), and "heathenism" (II,D). The Vulgate is cited for the first usage and Tertullian for the second.

42. Harnisch would of course disagree insofar as IV Ezra is concerned, for he considers the author to be struggling with gnostic tendencies which impart a taint to the earth and things material. Note, for example, Harnisch's treatment of 7:116b which builds on the Ethiopic text: the earth taught Adam to sin (see Harnisch, pp. 52ff). To the extent that Harnisch accepts an anti-material dualism in IV Ezra, even if such dualism is "only" a "heresy" which the author is combatting, he is following in the footsteps of Kabisch, Box, Keulers, and to a certain extent Weber. Kabisch (p. 23) notes that the author (of S) considers man's problem to stem from his earthly body, not from his soul; thus S is quite an other-worldly character, who seeks to escape the material evils of the present age. Box (p. xlvii) takes the same position. Keulers (p. 152), though he rejects the source criticism propounded by Kabisch and Box, retains the view that the author held an anti-material bias. A frequent aspect in the discussion is the role of the evil yetzer. Those who think that the author was dualistic in his outlook,

"it was very good" (1:31). Even though later OT writers could speak of the creation of a new earth (Is. 65:17; 66:22), the present earth was not thereby rejected. In the words of Ps. 24:1 (NEB): "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it." A further point which establishes the positive connotation of the term "earth" in IV Ezra is the author's own usage of "earth". Not only is this evident in his wholesome appreciation of the earth as part of God's creation (e.g., 6:38), but also in his tender regard for Mother Earth (cf. 10:9ff), an aspect which will be dealt with later in another connection.⁴³

Thus there remains a distinct possibility that the author's selection of "inhabitants of the world" in 3:34 and "inhabitants of the earth" in 3:35 is deliberate, with the former being intended to refer to the wicked Babylonians for whom this present evil age is intended (cf. 4:27; 7:50; 8:1, 46), and the latter referring to the whole human family. In fact, the author should have been driven by logical necessity to use two different terms here, for if the sins of Israel are to be compared with those of the "inhabitants of the world", Israel should not thereupon be immediately thrown in with those same "inhabitants of the world". So, just at that point where the author has changed the emphasis from the one/many argument to the many/few, he has also changed terminology. This suggestion that

generally give credence to Weber's interpretation of the evil yetzer as being localized in the body (see Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-251 [sections 47-53]). Porter (*op. cit.*, pp. 98-107) sharply criticizes Weber's methodology and his conclusions.

43. See section D, 4, a, below.

the author has changed arguments and terminology can be confirmed if the textual problem in 3:35b can be resolved. This point must now be taken up.

iii. The Sense of Comparison in 3:35b. While the present text of the Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic and Arabic-1 implies a sense of comparison in 35b,⁴⁴ all the versions agree in making 35a a general statement in an absolute sense: "When have the inhabitants of the earth (or "world", Syr., Eth.) not sinned in your sight?" This appears rather strange whether one connects it with what precedes or with what follows. If it is taken with the preceding, one would expect a comparative statement in keeping with the line of argument beginning in 3:28 which consistently draws the comparison between Zion and Babylon. Likewise, if 35b contains the comparative sense, one would expect a more or less parallel structure in 35a. If one is to suggest a modification of the text, it is much easier to conjecture ways in which 35b could have been erroneously translated to include the sense of comparison, than to suggest ways in which 35a could have lost it. Even in the present text, both the Latin "sic" and the Syriac *ܠܡܢ* could conceivably be understood in a non-comparative sense, though to translate it so as to retain that sense unambiguously is another matter. There are two other reasons, however for suspecting 35b, rather than 35a. First of all, from a grammatical and logical point of view, 35b, if it is to be precise, should either include some term for "other" or actually include Israel in the equation as has

44. See note 33 above.

been done by NEB: "Has any nation ever kept your commandments like Israel?"⁴⁵ Secondly, the author of IV Ezra in no other passage in the book unambiguously claims that Israel has kept the commandments.⁴⁶ In the comparative statements just preceding, he twice asks if Babylon's deeds are any better than Israel's (3:28, 31); he asks if any other nation has known God or has so believed God's covenants as Israel (3:32); and he asks God to weigh the sins of Israel and of Babylon to see which way the scale will incline (3:34). This hardly amounts to a claim for obedience even in a comparative sense, but rather a claim for less sin, or at best, a superior quality of belief or faith.⁴⁷ Thus 35b is suspect for a number of reasons. Although conjectural emendations of an original at two removes are not likely to carry a great deal of weight, a simple misunderstanding of an ambiguous reading in the Hebrew Vorlage may be at the root of the trouble. Both the Latin "sic" and the Syriac ܠܝܢ point to the Greek οὕτως , which in turn could suggest any one of a number of Hebrew originals, but if the Hebrew כֵּן , the most likely equivalent,⁴⁸ were original, it could very well have been intended to

45. The Ar-2, Arm., and Georgian versions solved the problem simply by dropping out the offending "sic".

46. See chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (a).

47. Faith in the sense of "confidence" rather than "faithfulness". Note Box's contention (p. xxxix) that (in S) it is "the acceptance of the Law that is the standard by which men must be judged at the last, not the observance of it."

48. Edwin Hatch and Henry Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint, II, Graz, Austria, 1954 (photomechanical reproduction of the Oxford, 1897, edition), p. 1035, lists thirty Hebrew words or phrases (under eighteen main headings) which are translated in the LXX by οὕτω , οὕτως , but by far the most frequent Hebrew equivalent for οὕτως is כֵּן . The same predominance of the $\text{οὕτως}/\text{כֵּן}$ equivalence also holds true for Ecclus., as is evident from Rudolf Smend, Griechisch-syrisch-hebräischer Index zur Weisheit des Jesus Sirach, Berlin, 1907, oo. 174-175. The Hebrew כֵּן , at least in the meaning of "thus" and

be understood by the author as the adverbial usage of ך (✓ ך) to be translated "aright" or "rightly" as in Jer. 8:6 and Judges 12:6 (cf. RSV), whereas the Greek translator obviously took it for the adverb ך meaning "thus" or "so", and accordingly, rendered οὕτως .⁴⁹ This accounts for the comparative sense which appears in the Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic-1. The one major problem connected with this solution is the lack of specific attestation in late Hebrew for ך in the sense of "right" or "rightly", yet a closer look at the occurrences of ך in the OT where this meaning has been suggested, reveals that the versions, both ancient and modern, as well as modern lexicographers, hardly agree on which occurrences are to

"so", is also extant in the DSS (see Karl Georg Kuhn, Konkordanz zu den Qumrantexten, Göttingen, 1960, p. 104, for list of passages). Marcus Jastrow also lists ך with the meanings of "thus" and "so" in A Dictionary of the Targumim, New York, 1971, p. 674. So the evidence points in the direction of ך as the most likely reading behind a Greek οὕτως .

49. The relationship between ך meaning "thus" and "so", and ך meaning "rightly" and "right", is not at all certain. Both BDB and KB have separate entries for the two different meanings. BDB (p. 485) does not choose to list ך meaning "thus" and "so" under a root, but does suggest that it came "from the demonstr. ✓ ka found in ' ך etc.". The other ך is listed by BDB (p. 467) under ✓ ך . KB (p. 442), however, lists ך (✓ ך) first, followed by a second entry for ך meaning "thus" and "so", but KB suggests that this meaning developed from the first one as follows: "the right manner > this manner > thus". This postulating of a single genealogy instead of two is also adopted by Solomon Mandelkern, Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae, Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae, Tel-Aviv, 1971, p. 585, who lists all the occurrences of ך under one heading, suggesting ך as the root, but noting a comparison with ך . Kuhn (loc. cit.) lists only one entry, and the occurrences he cites in the major sectarian scrolls (i.e., IQS, IQM, IQH, CDC) for the most part seem to be a simple usage of the term with the meaning of "thus" or "so". Jastrow (op. cit., p. 647) cites two relevant entries for ך . For the first, he gives the meanings of "thus" and "so", noting ' ך and ך as equivalents in biblical Hebrew. For the second entry (ך , ך , noted as the same as "Chaldean"), he gives the following meanings: "after this, therefore; it is so; (interrog.) is it so, indeed?". The latter meanings perhaps obliquely approach the adjectival use of ך in the sense of "right". At the end of this entry, Jastrow notes that the phrase ך ך occurs frequently in the sense of "but if this be so" (i.e., right, true?). The adverbial meaning in the sense of "rightly" which seems to be required in IV Ezra 3:35b is not listed, however, by Jastrow.

be translated as "thus" or "so" and which are to be translated as "rightly" or "right".⁵⁰ Taking several authorities together (i.e., LXX, Syriac, KJV, RSV, NEB, BDB, KB), the only passage (apart from the plural usage in Gen. 42) in which all agree that ך should be translated in the sense of "rightly" or "right", instead of as "thus" or "so", is Num. 27:7. It may further be noted that in six instances (Num. 36:5; Judges 12:6; II Kings 7:9; 17:9;

50. The KJV translates ך in the sense of "rightly" or "right" in the following passages: Gen. 42:11, 19, 31, 33, 34 (כִּי); Ex. 10:29; Num. 27:7; 36:5; Judges 12:6; II Kings 7:9; 17:9; Jer. 8:6; 23:10. In Is. 33:23, ך is also so translated by the KJV but BDB and KB both trace this occurrence to the root כנע (כ = base), so it will be disregarded in the comparisons cited below. BDB confirms the translations of the KJV in the passages cited and adds the following passages: Josh. 2:4; Ps. 65:10 (EVV 9); Prov. 11:19; 15:7; 28:2; Eccl. 8:10; Is. 16:6; and Jer. 48:30. KB does not list Ex. 10:29; Ps. 65:10 (EVV 9); Prov. 28:2; Is. 16:6; or Jer. 8:6. But KB adds I Sam. 23:17; Job. 9:35; Ps. 90:12, and Jer. 5:2 (which, however, may be disregarded for present purposes since it is a conjecture of כ - נל for כנל). Now the LXX treatment of ך in the passages cited above is particularly interesting. Of all the passages cited, only in Gen. 42 where the plural form כִּיִּם occurs five times (Gen. 42:11, 19, 31, 33, 34), and in Numbers 27:7 does the LXX give a translation which unambiguously indicates an understanding of ך in the sense of "rightly" or "right" ($\epsilon\iota\pi\eta\nu\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$ = "peaceful" in Gen. 42, and $\text{'Ορθ\omega\varsigma}$ = "rightly" in Numbers 27:7). The term is simply omitted from Ex. 10:29 and by כ and ב in Ps. 90:12 (LXX: 89:12; MS A has $\text{ο\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma}$). Prov. 11:19 has a textual variant (כ for כ), Prov. 15:7 has $\text{ο\upsilon\kappa\ \alpha\sigma\phi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\varsigma}$ for כ - נל , and Prov. 28:2 has an entirely different text from that of the Hebrew (NEB follows the LXX here). Josh. 2:4 substitutes the participle $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha$ for ך . In all the other instances, a total of fourteen, the LXX simply renders ך as $\text{ο\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma}$. The Syriac, on the other hand, much more readily translates ך with a term related to "rightly" or "right". In Gen. 42:11, 19, 31, 33, 34, it uses the term כִּי . In Prov. 15:7 and Jer. 48:30a כִּי is used. In Num. 27:7; 36:5; II Kings 7:9, and Jer. 8:6, כִּי appears. Ex. 10:29 has כִּי and II Kings 17:9 has כִּי . Josh. 2:4 uses כִּי and Ps. 65:10 appears to render ך by means of כִּי . Prov. 11:19 has the same textual variant as the LXX (כ for כ), and the term seems to have been simply omitted from Job. 9:35; Ps. 90:12; Prov. 28:2. The proper equivalent for ך in the sense of "thus" and "so", namely, כִּי appears only six times: Judges 12:6; I Sam. 23:17; Eccl. 8:10; Is. 16:6; Jer. 48:30b; Amos 5:14. The RSV apparently reads ך as meaning "thus", or its equivalent, eight times: Ex. 10:29; I Sam. 23:17; Job. 9:35; Ps. 65:10 (EVV 9); Ps. 90:12; Eccl. 8:10; Amos 5:14.

Jer. 8:6; 23:10) where the KJV, RSV, BDB, and KB (except for Jer. 8:6) agree in rendering ך in the sense of "right" or "rightly", the LXX in each case renders by οὕτως . This suggests either that the LXX translators tended to mechanically translate ך by οὕτως , or that οὕτως ought to be given a broader spectrum of meanings than is suggested by Liddell and Scott.⁵¹ But in any case, it is clear that a certain ambiguity is inherent in the occurrences of ך in biblical Hebrew, and this ambiguity makes it a good candidate for IV Ezra 3: 35b, but whether or not ך in the sense of "rightly" or "right" was part of the writing vocabulary of the author of IV Ezra remains problematical. BDB and KB both cite this usage in some of the later passages of the OT (Eccl. 8:10; Proverbs 11:19; 15:7), but Jastrow only obliquely hints at this meaning for late Hebrew.⁵² Nevertheless, the rather free use of the Syriac ܕܠܐ and its cognates, along with related synonyms, to translate the Hebrew ך , suggests that the use of ך in the sense of "rightly" or "right" was at least recognized as such by the translators of the Peshitta in a time not too far removed from that of IV Ezra.⁵³

51. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, ninth ed. with supplement, Oxford, 1968, p. 1276, lists οὕτως with a meaning of "even so" or "just so", which appears to be as close as it comes to a usage with the meaning of "right" or "rightly". But "even so" or "just so" is suggested for οὕτως when it is used alone in answers, so the sense of "thus" and "so" is still predominant. None of the meanings given by Liddell and Scott approximate the adverbial sense of "aright" or "rightly" which seems to be required by ך in such passages as Judges 12:6 and Jer. 8:6 where the LXX has translated it by means of οὕτως .

52. See the end of note 49 above.

53. Eissfeldt, *Intro.*, p. 699, suggests a date in the early or mid-second century A.D. for the Peshitta translation. See note 50 above, for the terms used by the Syriac translators to render ך .

In addition, KB notes that ׀, in modern Hebrew, occurs in the sense of "it is right", and "certainly" (cf. Josh. 2:4).⁵⁴ But even if an original

׀ is not the solution to the problem presented in 3:35b by the comparative sense implied by "sic", it is quite probable that the Georgian, Arabic-2, and Armenian sensed the difficulty, for they simply dropped the offending "sic". This does produce a suitable reading and provides a reasonable parallel to 3:35a.⁵⁵ If, however, the suggestion of an ambiguous ׀ in the Hebrew original can be accepted as an explanation of the present text of the more reliable versions, then 3:35b can be translated as: "What nation has rightly kept your commandments?" This forms a nice parallel with 3:35a and suggests the solution to the last remaining problem.

iv. Singular or Plural for "nation" in 3:36? The majority of the Latin MSS (followed by RSV) favor "nations" in the plural for verse 36, thus again implying a contrast between Israel as the only "good" nation and all the other "evil" nations--noteworthy individuals being excepted. But among the Latin MSS, L reads the singular and thus agrees with the Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Armenian.⁵⁶ NEB also accepts the singular. The context, if the above reconstruction is correct, would also require a singular. Thus 3:36 should be rendered as follows: "You might find

54. KB, p. 442.

55. It is of interest to note that the LXX and Peshitta translators of the OT apparently followed this same procedure in dealing with perplexing occurrences of ׀. See the LXX of Ex. 10:29, and the readings of א and B of Ps. 90:12 (LXX: 89:12). See the Syriac of Job 9:35; Ps. 90:12 and Prov. 28:2.

56. Ar-1 and Ar-2 also read the singular, but with modifications. Ar-1 introduces the idea of comparison again by speaking of "another people". Ar-2, apparently noting the similarity between 35b and 36b, has dropped 36b.

individual men of note, but nowhere a whole nation."

As a result of the points discussed above, the following translation for 3:35-36 can be suggested: "Or when have the inhabitants of the earth not sinned before you? Or what nation has rightly kept your commandments? You might find individual men of note, but nowhere a whole nation." This draws together Ezra's argument in a summary which includes both his concern for Israel and his concern for all mankind. The implication is that very few men, whether from Israel or anywhere else are capable of obeying God's law, and as Ezra infers previously, this is because of the evil heart which was in Adam and in all his descendants (3:21, 26). Now Uriel's response in 4:4 links up with Ezra's prayer: I will show you what you desire to know, i.e., why the heart is evil. Whether Uriel actually fulfills that promise is another matter, but at least he can be given credit for correctly summarizing the point of Ezra's prayer.⁵⁷

3. Summary: Use of the One/Many and the Many/Few Arguments in Episode I

A survey of the material discussed above suggests that Ezra's primary concern throughout episode I is with the fate of Israel, but there is a definite undercurrent of concern for all mankind as well. In chapter 3, Ezra refers explicitly to God's acts for his people (3:13-19, 23-24), and he compares Israel's miserable lot with Babylon's prosperity (3:2, 27-28,

57. It should be added, however, that even if the above interpretation is not accepted and 3:35-36 is still taken to refer only to the Gentiles, one would have to consider it highly unlikely that Ezra would admit that there are exceptional individuals among the nations, and not in Israel as well.

30), but the frequent references pointing back to Adam as the beginning of man's problems demonstrate Ezra's concern for the lot of mankind in general (3:5ff, 10, 21, 26). The final two verses of chapter 3 bring together both the author's concern for the one and many: When has mankind not sinned? What nation has rightly kept God's commandments? In fact, no nation can be found, only the rare individual (3:35-36). Uriel picks up Ezra's universalistic concern and promises to tell him why the heart is evil (4:4). But chapter 4 continues the parallel concern for the one and for the many, with Ezra mingling complaints both about Israel and about man's miserable lot (4:12, 22-25). Uriel, however, is the one who highlights the many/few argument by emphasizing the fact that man can neither understand God's ways (4:11, 21), nor affect the divine plan for the world (4:40-42). Thus Uriel tends to produce a two-pole tension of God vs. all mankind. In Uriel's first attempt to propose that the bliss of the age to come is the answer to Ezra's problems, he suggests that God is concerned for the many, but Ezra only for himself (4:34). By "many", Uriel probably means the "saved" who are yet to come, but Ezra reacts by claiming that hopes for the future are minimal anyway since "all of us are full of ungodliness" (4:38), a point which Uriel seems tacitly to accept since he does not again argue that many will enjoy the age to come. Rather, he returns to the emphasis on the gulf between God and man by using the simile of the womb to illustrate how little effect man can actually have on God's predetermined plans: when the time is fulfilled, Hades will give forth that which is entrusted to her (4:40-42). The episode draws to a close with Uriel's rather gloomy rehearsal of the signs of the end (5:1-12), followed by a final focus on Israel in Phaltiel's intervention on behalf of the people (5:16-18).

It cannot be said that either the one/many or the many/few argument has heavily dominated the other in episode I. Nevertheless, the one/many argument is more explicit, and in addition, retains the first and last argument in the episode. Yet the many/few argument remains as a firm undercurrent, and in fact, is thrown into bold relief by the type of arguments employed by Uriel in chapter 4. One cannot as yet, however, really speak of the many/few argument "progressing" towards its climax in episode III, but the essential framework of the God vs. man tension has been established and will be further developed in II before the avalanche breaks in III.

B. The Development and Use of the One/Many and the Many/Few Arguments
in Episode II

Whereas the arguments for the one/many and the many/few have been seen to be thoroughly interwoven with each other in I, they seem to be more readily identifiable in separate contexts in II. As in I, the concern for Israel predominates over the concern for all mankind, and in fact, II uses some illustrations and arguments very similar to those of I, but reapplies them, placing the emphasis more on Israel. In order to place these characteristics in perspective, a slightly different method of tabulating the data has been selected for episode II. First, those passages are listed which seem to recapitulate or reapply various aspects of I. If the parallel is quite similar, the reference from I is simply indicated in parentheses; if the passage from I is more remote, or represents a different use of the material contained in I, then "cf." has been placed before the reference in parentheses. Secondly, a brief outline of II has been given for the purpose of indicating the points of transition between those contexts which deal with the one/many and those

dealing with the many/few.

1. The Constituent Elements

a. Summary of Passages in Episode II which Recapitulate
or Reapply Terminology and Arguments from Episode I

- 5:23-28 (cf. 3:11, 12-19, 23-24). By means of a whole series of comparisons in II, Israel the one is contrasted with the many: vine/forest, region/lands, lily/flowers, river/seas, Zion/cities, dove/birds, sheep/flocks, people/nations. This compares with the passage in I where God acted for the one: Noah/many sinners, Abraham/many sinners, (Jacob/Esau), David/many sinners.
- 5:28-30 (3:27-34). In this passage in II, Ezra three times explicitly compares the one with the many, and draws attention to the fact that Babylon has no regard for God's promises or law. The parallel passage in I is remarkably similar both in form and content: in both cases the complaint is the last element in an initial prayer, and in both cases, the comparatively greater wickedness of Babylon is mentioned.
- 5:33 (U), (cf. 4:34). Uriel explicitly affirms God's love for Israel in II, whereas in I, Uriel simply claims that God is interested in the many. Ezra is mildly rebuked in both instances.
- 5:34-35 (4:12, 22-25). In both I and II, Ezra laments his inability to understand God's ways or Israel's suffering, but the context of II virtually eliminates the universalistic overtones which are present in the parallel passage in I.
- 5:36-37 (U), (4:5; cf. 4:13-21). In II, Uriel asks seven (Syr.) impossible

questions, whereas, in I, he asks three. The main difference, however, is the way in which II focuses the attention on Israel. Both the passages in I simply emphasize the gulf between human and divine affairs.

5:38-39 (4:6; cf. 4:19). Both in I and II, Ezra claims inability to do the impossible.

5:40 (U), (cf. 4:34). For the second time in II (cf. 5:33), Uriel emphasizes God's love for Israel.

5:42 (U), (cf. 4:42). In II, Uriel uses the circle to illustrate that there is no slowness or haste with God. In I, he uses the womb as an illustration that there can be no delaying of God's plans. Both are examples of the way Uriel appeals to a deterministic divine plan for the world.

5:43 (cf. 4:39). In II, Ezra apparently wants the judgment to come more quickly, which is a rarity for him; later (in III), he is more fearful of the prospects of judgment. In I, he implies a hope for the consummation when he asks whether the sins of the earth's inhabitants can delay the end, but the element of anticipation is somewhat stronger in the reference in II.

5:44 (U), (cf. 4:34, 42). Ezra's impatient haste is contrasted with the more considered haste of God, which, according to Uriel, is fast enough. Both contexts are dealing with the delay of the consummation.

5:46-49 (U), (cf. 4:40-42). Both in I and II, the womb is used to illustrate the "timeliness" of God's plans for the world. Though the figure is applied somewhat differently in each case, both contexts are dealing with the delay of the consummation.

5:50 (cf. 4:44-46, 51). Both in I and II, Ezra's concern is about the nearness of the end.

5:51-55 (U), (cf. 4:26-32). II again uses the figure of the womb (cf. 5:42 above), but applies it in a different way, namely, to illustrate how the present evil age is deteriorating and drawing to a close. Much the same point is made in I by means of the parable of the evil seed.

6:7 (4:44-46, 51). Ezra restates his question of 5:50, asking about the end of this age and the beginning of the next.

6:8-10 (U), (cf. 3:15-16 Ezra). II uses the figure of Jacob and Esau to illustrate that nothing will intervene between this age and the age to come. I, on the other hand, also uses the figure of Jacob and Esau, but in a literal rather than a figurative sense. From 4:26-32 one could perhaps conclude that the coming age will follow right on the heels of the present one, but the data is insufficient for a firm conclusion.

6:11-16 (cf. 4:51-52). The introduction to the signs in II is more elaborate than in I. Notably, Ezra asks for the signs in II, whereas he does not do so in I, Uriel's statement in 4:52 notwithstanding.

6:17-24 (5:1-12). Only the first part of the eschatological excursus in II consists of messianic woes, whereas in I, the whole section is negative. Uriel goes on, in II, to speak of salvation and of a changed spirit among men (6:25-28).

6:29-34 (cf. 5:14-15). The conclusion of the vision in II is followed by words of encouragement, praise and admonition, whereas in I, only Ezra's weakened condition is mentioned, whereupon the angel strengthens him.

b. Summary of Points of Transition between Concern for
Israel (One/Many) and Concern for All Mankind (Many/Few)
in Episode II

5:21-22 (introduction)

5:23-40 Israel (one/many)

5:41 (transitional question)

5:42-6:6 All Mankind (many/few)

6:7 (transitional question)

6:8-10 Israel (one/many)

6:11-28 Eschatological excursus (mixed argument?)

6:29-34 Uriel's exhortation to Ezra

2. The Author's Argument

a. Analysis of the One/Many and the Many/Few Elements in
Episode II

A quick perusal of the outlines above reveals at least three significant aspects: (1) The way in which the concern for Israel dominates the dialogue portion of the episode (i.e., the part preceding the eschatological excursus) from a formal point of view by retaining the first and last word; (2) The way in which the one/many and the many/few arguments have been clustered in separate sections rather than being woven together as in I; (3) The re-application of terms and arguments which were used in I, generally with the effect of focusing more of the attention on Israel. The significance of these aspects for the structure of IV Ezra and the place of II within that structure will be touched on in the discussion that follows.

i. The One/Many Argument in Episode II. Looking first of all at those aspects of II which emphasize the election of Israel, and accordingly, are part of the one/many argument, one is struck by the manner in which essentially the same ground is covered as in I, but with the universalistic implications for the most part deleted. For example, in the initial prayer in II (5:23-30), Israel's election is forcefully presented, but the attention is directed exclusively to God's work for Israel the nation, rather than being linked with the history of the world since Adam. In I, the history of God's dealings is taken right back to Adam, the father of all mankind, and the one/many contrast is brought in even before Abraham, i.e., with the election of Noah (3:10-11). Furthermore, the evil heart, as a malady that has always afflicted man ever since the creation of Adam, gives a universalistic touch to the prayer in I, in contrast to the prayer in II. The conclusions to the two prayers exhibit the same difference, for though the greater wickedness of Babylon is stressed in both, the prayer in I definitely concludes with a reference to the human dilemma (3:35-36), whereas the prayer in II focuses solely on Israel (5:30). This more acute focusing on Israel's dilemma is also evident in the Uriel-Ezra dialogue which immediately follows the prayer. Although Uriel uses precisely the same type of argument as in I, i.e., the impossible question (5:36-37; cf. 4:5ff), he does not use it simply to illustrate the great gulf that exists between mankind and God, but rather to call attention to Ezra's inability to understand God's great love for Israel (5:40; cf. also 5:33). This has the effect of restricting the universalistic implications which tend to appear in chapter 4 ~~of the first episode~~. The two statements by Uriel to the effect that God loves Israel (5:33, 40) is some

sort of advance on his statements in I, for there Uriel merely speaks for the "many" (4:34) without clearly specifying who is involved. Because of the way in which Uriel has redirected his arguments, Ezra's responses in II cannot easily be interpreted as implying a concern for all men. Until the transitional question in 5:41, the attention is thus focused almost exclusively on Israel.

There is a brief return to the one/many argument just before the eschatological excursus, but the content is not so significant as the terminology. In 6:8-10, the succession from this age is compared with Jacob's hand which took hold of Esau's heel. The conclusion drawn by Uriel is that there is no interlude between this age and the next, but implicit is also the thought that this age is for the many Gentiles (Esau), and the next is for the one nation Israel (Jacob). Thus Uriel's interest is seen to lie almost exclusively with God's people Israel. This fact may be relevant to the discussion of the eschatological excursus, for there is very little to indicate whether the salvation spoken of in 6:25-28 is exclusively for Jews, or whether it is perhaps intended for the Gentiles as well, and since there is no dialogue to help clarify the issue, one would have to rely on conclusions drawn from Uriel's comments elsewhere. But it is legitimate to question whether or not the eschatological excurses are actually that closely linked with the argument of the dialogues. Without going as far as Kabisch and suggesting that heterogeneous sources were brought together by a redactor, one can still recognize the significant contrasts in style, content, and form, that set the eschatological sections apart.⁵⁸ It could very well be that the author has drawn

58. See Stone, "Concept of the Messiah," pp. 304ff for a discussion of the author's use of sources and traditional material in IV Ezra. Klijn (*op. cit.*) deals with much the same questions in connection with II Baruch.

on "sources" to provide a "breather" from time to time in order to rest the mind from the intensity of the dialogue. If it could be accepted that the eschatological sections are not to be linked directly with Uriel's statements elsewhere, then one need not assume a priori that the salvation of 6:25-28 is for Israel simply because it comes from Uriel, who elsewhere rather consistently restricts his attention to the righteous in Israel. Be that as it may, however, there is only one explicit reference to Israel in the eschatological section of II, and that occurs in 6:19 where it speaks of the time when the humiliation of Zion is complete: but this is merely a sign of the end-time, and does not indicate who or how many will actually be saved. There is also no definite reference to the Gentiles in 6:13-28. While judgment and penalty for iniquity are spoken of in 6:18-19, these are simply mentioned in relationship to the "inhabitants of the earth". Given Uriel's attitudes towards the Gentiles and the wicked in general (cf. 7:20, 37ff, 61, 79ff; 9:9), it is noteworthy that there is not a hint of an attitude of vengeance in this episode.

ii. The Many/Few Argument in Episode II. Turning to the section in II which appears to belong to the universalistic many/few strand (5:42-6:6), one actually discovers very little which directly discusses the fate of the many over against the survival of the few. The main evidence for considering this section to be a part of the many/few argument comes not from the content or the acuteness of Exra's questions, but from the type of illustrations used by Uriel and by the way that creation, rather than Israel's election, dominates virtually the whole section. With reference to the illustrations used by Uriel, it can be said that he has again resorted to divine determinism

as a means of emphasizing the gulf between God and man, thereby thwarting Ezra's inquiries. First, he uses the figure of a circle to illustrate that there can be no slowness or haste with God (5:42). This bears a certain similarity to the passage in I where Uriel uses the figure of the womb to teach that there can be no delaying of God's plans (4:40-42). The figure of the womb is also used twice in II (5:46ff, 51ff), not just to illustrate the timeliness of God's plans as in I, but also to demonstrate the orderliness of his creation (5:48), and the nearness of the end (5:51ff). In each case, the impression is given that Ezra must simply stand helpless before the divine juggernaut, and accept as best he can, Uriel's statement that God has planned everything and has things well under control. In addition to these statements from Uriel which reveal man's inability to intervene in God's plans or even to understand them, there are repeated references to God as creator, thus reinforcing the impression that this section is concerned with a human problem, not just a Jewish one. Statements touching on the creation theme come both from the mouth of Ezra (5:43, 45, 50, 56) as well as from the mouth of Uriel (5:44, 55; 6:6), but there is more than just the occasional mention of creation, for the whole section 5:43-6:6 is in some sense dealing with the whole of creation, either with reference to the Endzeit (5:43-55), or the Urzeit (6:1-6). Of particular interest in that part of II which is dominated by the concept of creation, is the passage where Ezra refers to the earth as "our mother" (5:50). This concept becomes of considerable importance in the transitional episode IV, where there is a certain oscillation between Mother Earth and Mother Zion.⁵⁹ Here, however,

59. See section D, 4, below.

"our mother" can only refer to the earth, and accordingly fits well in the universalistic context in which it appears.

b. The Hint of Optimism from Ezra in Episode II

Another aspect of interest in II which should be mentioned, involves the dialogue as well as the final two sections (i.e., the eschatological section, and the commendation of Ezra), and that is the trace of optimism which on occasion attempts to surface. There is just the slightest hint of optimism in I, where Ezra asks if the sins of the people can perhaps delay the consummation (4:39). That is a rather pessimistic way of being optimistic to be sure, but it reveals at least a glimmer of desire for the consummation. Now in II, Ezra is somewhat more forthright in desiring the judgment to come (5:43), but the most optimistic passage in II comes from Uriel and forms the latter part of the eschatological section (6:25-28). There Uriel clearly speaks of a remnant who will be saved, and of the earth's inhabitants receiving a changed heart and being converted to a different spirit; evil, deceit, and corruption will be blotted out, and faithfulness and truth will flourish. The question has been raised above as to whether this passage refers to Jews or to Jews and Gentiles. The fact that it is spoken by Uriel is perhaps the greatest hindrance to understanding it as having a universalistic application. If that objection can be overcome as suggested above, then a wider application can at least be considered. In favor of a wider application is the fact, that, while sinners are destroyed (in II), there is no trace of an attitude of vengeance, and in fact, the Gentiles are not separately identified at all. Furthermore, the same general descriptive phrase is used to describe those

who are judged and those who are saved: in 6:18, judgment falls upon the "inhabitants of the earth", whereas in 6:26 the "inhabitants of the earth" are the ones whose hearts are changed and are converted to a different spirit. It should be noted, however, that the parallelism with the last phrase is weakened somewhat by the fact that "earth" is missing from the Latin MSS with the exception of MS L.⁶⁰

The finishing touch to the hint of optimism in II is Uriel's word of commendation to Ezra (6:29-34). This is the most overt praise of the seer thus far in IV Ezra, but it is by no means isolated, for the occasional word of encouragement occurs sporadically through the next episode as well, even appearing when Ezra and Uriel are locked in vigorous debate (cf. 7:76-77; 8:46ff).

c. Possible Polemic in 6:6

There is one further problem in II which should be mentioned, at least in brief, though a satisfactory solution does not seem readily available, and that is the apparently polemical statement in 6:6 that the world was planned and created by God and by no one else; likewise the end will come through God and no one else. It is noteworthy that the last line ("et finis per me et non per alium") is contained only in the Latin; the oriental versions all

60. In 6:18, all the versions include "earth" in a phrase equivalent to "inhabitants of the earth". In 6:26, only MS L from the Latin tradition includes the term "earth" ("in terram"). Violet I takes the majority reading which has simply "heart of the inhabitants" ("cor inhabitantium"). The Syriac, Georgian, Ethiopic, Ar-1, Ar-2, all contain the term "earth", though only one Ethiopic MS attests "earth"; the other MSS used by Dillmann have "world". The Armenian has "corda habitatorum huius mundi".

omit it, perhaps, as Box and others have suggested, for dogmatic reasons.⁶¹

It is possible that the passage is intended to counteract the growing influence of Christian messianism, just as the passage immediately following (6:7-10) may be polemic against the idea of a messianic reign. But given the role which the Messiah plays in IV Ezra, even though it is clearly a subordinate role, it is difficult to accept either of these passages as polemic against messianic interpretations.⁶²

The possibility may be raised rather tentatively that 6:6 in its larger context (5:56-6:6) could refer to the over-all problem with which the author seems to be struggling, namely, God's relationship to the problem of evil. Is the author perhaps saying that any solution to the problem of evil must take cognizance of the fact that this is God's creation? In the "Urzeit" he planned it and made it and in the "Endzeit", it is his sole responsibility as well. This would link up with the fact that IV Ezra nowhere hints at a personal Satan--in the end, Ezra can blame no one but God. Hence, the great agony which is so vividly portrayed in episode III which follows.

61. Box, p. 67. Myers (p. 197) is less certain that dogmatic motives are involved.

62. The possibility of polemic against messianic ideas, Christian or otherwise, seems less likely since the author has made considerable use of messianic ideas himself. Box, of course, could solve any problems of discrepancy between passages by assigning the problem verses to different sources. Note his discussion of 6:7-10 on pp. 67-68, where he tries to determine whether the Jacob/Esau parable refers to the coming messianic era or the other-worldly age to come. Box opts for placing 6:7-10 in S which means that it must virtually be considered as polemic against messianic teachings which are propounded in the other sources. Stone, however, in "The Concept of the Messiah in IV Ezra", has demonstrated the essential unity of the messianic concepts in IV Ezra. See especially his summary (part IV, pp. 310-312).

3. Summary: The Development of the Argument in Episode II

By way of summary, some attempt must be made to explain the various aspects of the one/many and the many/few arguments in II as part of the over-all pattern of the book. Quite clearly, the concern for Israel (one/many) predominates over the concern for all mankind (many/few). Both Uriel and Ezra indicate by their comments that Israel's destiny is of prime importance. The evidence for a concept of universalism, on the other hand, comes not so much from Ezra as it does from the type of argument used by Uriel which emphasizes the great gulf between God and man. In addition, however, the dialogue centers, for a time, on the theme of creation, thus broadening the horizon to include an interest in the human dilemma. If anything, II is less strident than I, a fact hinted at by the touches of optimism, the hopes of salvation for the "inhabitants of the earth", and the commendation of Ezra in conclusion. So in terms of progression towards the transition in IV, II represents a step back from the open questioning of God's government hinted at in I, and which will yet be made so explicit in III. If one were to suggest a hypothesis as to how episode II might fit into the author's over-all scheme, it could be linked to the fact that the author apparently wishes to suggest a corrective to Jewish theology in the direction of a more universal concern, while basically remaining faithful to his Jewish heritage. The fact that the whole book ends on a more confident note suggests that this was indeed the author's aim. Accordingly, Ezra could not be allowed to appear as skeptic only, nor to show concern for all mankind

without paying particular attention to Israel as well. In episode I, therefore, the element of complaint is strong, though Ezra is still within the fold of faith. Concern for Israel is overt, but there is a strong undercurrent of concern about all mankind. Before Ezra can really open the debate to the extent necessary, however, his own orthodoxy must be above reproach. And this is where episode II fits in. After the significant questions are raised in I, the author takes pains to establish the position of both Ezra and Uriel before the crucial episode III. Once Ezra's position as spokesman for Israel is established beyond question, he can advance further and seriously suggest that all mankind is in trouble and in desperate need of God's mercy just as Israel is. Uriel's position is of less interest because his orthodoxy is never questioned; through each of the episodes he is the faithful exponent of the belief that the righteous in Israel, few though they may be, will be the ones to inherit the age to come.

C. The Development and Use of the One/Many and the Many/Few Arguments in Episode III

The development of the argument in III presents an interesting contrast with the emphases of the first two episodes. Although both the concern for Israel the nation and the interest in the fate of all mankind are evident in I and II, the predominant concern in both episodes appears to be the destiny of Israel. In III, however, the concern for the destiny of all mankind quickly overshadows the concern for Israel. Since the material in III is rather voluminous, making it difficult to gain an over-all impression of the whole episode, a condensed thematic outline is given below which indicates

the major transitions in thought, and the particular contributions of both the dialogue participants. Since the number of passages which state or imply an interest in Israel the nation are few, these are brought together in a separate listing and will be discussed as a preliminary step to the analysis of the many/few argument which involves the bulk of the episode.

1. Outline of Episode III

- E 6:35-59 Ezra concludes a lengthy homily on the events of creation week with a lament over the fact that Israel is oppressed by the Gentiles and has not been able to receive the world which was created for her.
- U 7:1-16 Uriel states that Israel can only obtain her inheritance by successfully enduring the difficulties which have resulted from Adam's sin.
- E 7:17-18 Ezra laments the double injustice done to the ungodly: they not only suffer here, but they receive no reward in the hereafter.
- U 7:19-44 Uriel defends God's condemnation of the disobedient and describes the judgment scene in which the wicked receive their just sentence.
- E 7:45-48 Ezra laments over those who are burdened with an evil heart and thus are incapable of obedience.
- U/E 7:49-61 The plentiful/rare debate: Uriel defends God's justice in saving the few while not grieving over the many who perish.
- E 7:62-69 Ezra laments the fate of the human race, claiming that the beasts actually fare better because they have no judgment to face.
- U 7:70-74 Uriel defends the destruction of the wicked on the basis that they have sinned knowingly.

- E/U 7:75-101 Ezra asks if "we" are to rest until the renewal, or are to be tormented immediately after death. Uriel responds with a vivid description of the anguish which is to afflict the wicked and the bliss which the saved will enjoy.
- E/U 7:102-115 The intercession debate: In response to Ezra's question, Uriel replies that the righteous cannot intercede on the behalf of the ungodly.
- E 7:116-126 Ezra laments over the fact that many blessings have been prepared which will not be enjoyed by the perishing sinners.
- U 7:127-131 Uriel defends God's justice in destroying the ungodly: every man has had his chance to choose.
- E 7:132-140 In a midrash on Ex. 34:6-7, Ezra recalls God's goodness and mercy.
- U 8:1-3 Uriel returns to the plentiful/rare contrast as a means of justifying God's ways.
- E 8:4-36 Ezra laments the hopelessness of man's condition and appeals to God to save both those who deserve it and those who do not.
- U 8:37-41 Uriel defends God's justice in saving only the righteous.
- E 8:42-45 Ezra appeals to God to have mercy on his people because they are his own creation.
- U 8:46-62 Uriel describes the bliss of the saved and justifies the damnation of those who perish.
- E/U 8:63-9:13 In response to a question from Ezra, Uriel describes the end of time and defends God's judgment regarding the righteous and the wicked.

- E 9:14-16 Ezra utters one final complaint about the many who will be lost.
- U 9:17-25 Uriel concludes the episode with a justification of God's intention to save his one (people?) while letting the multitude perish.

2. Traces of the One/Many Argument in Episode III

a. Passages which Imply an Interest in Israel (One/Many)
in Episode III

- 6:54-59 (E) Ezra concludes his initial creation homily with an explicit lament over Israel's fate in the hands of the Gentiles.
- 7:1-11 (U) Uriel states that Israel cannot attain her inheritance unless she endures the difficulties which have resulted from Adam's sin.
- 7:37-42 (U) Uriel speaks of the condemnation of the "nations" in the judgment.
- 7:106-111 (E) Ezra refers to examples of righteous men in Israel who have interceded for the ungodly.
- 8:15-19 (E) Ezra turns from his concern for all mankind and laments Israel's fate.
- 8:26-30 (E) Ezra appeals to God to remember those who have kept his commands and who have faithfully served him.
- 8:45 (E) Ezra appeals to God to have mercy on his people and on his inheritance because God should have mercy on his own creation.
- 9:17-22 (U) Uriel states that God is justified in saving his one grape and his one plant while letting the multitude perish.

b. Analysis of Passages in Episode III which Imply an Interest in Israel (One/Many)

When the above list of direct or indirect references either to Israel, or to the nations who oppose Israel is compared with the total volume of material contained in episode III, one begins to appreciate how markedly the many/few argument has taken the dominant position, and the contrast is even greater than might appear from the above list, for not all the above passages are really part of the one/many argument. Strictly speaking, the one/many argument implies the contrast of the one nation Israel with the many Gentile nations. But there is an intermediate step between this position and the many/few argument, and that is the simple appeal to God to remember Israel without contrasting her condition with the other prosperous nations. With this in mind, only three of the above passages actually are part of the formal one/many pattern. The first, 6:54-59, is the most explicit, for here Ezra specifically states that Israel has been given over into the hands of the many nations (6:57-58). Significantly, however, this appeal is linked with creation, rather than with Abraham or the Sinai experience. Thus a certain parallel is provided with the initial prayer of episode I which also begins with the creation theme.⁶³ But in III, a common rabbinic

63. The development in III, however, contrasts sharply with that of I, in that the complaint in III is preceded by a long section which is purely laudatory (6:38-55). From the standpoint of structure, this parallels the initial prayer of II (5:23-30), which does not mention creation, dealing only with Israel's election, but which also contains an initial section of praise (5:23-27). The development of the prayer in I involves a thoroughly mixing of praise and lament right from the first, alternating between description of man's rebellion and God's act of salvation.

teaching is employed, namely, that the world was created for the sake of Israel (6:55, 59).⁶⁴ The use of the creation theme here, however, is of interest primarily because of the way that Ezra refers to creation elsewhere in III, either as the time when man's problems began (cf. 7:62ff, 116ff), or as the basis on which God should save man (7:134; 8:7-14, 44-45; cf. 8:24). There is no trace of such rationale in 6:35-59, though, and the most that can be said is that this initial creation homily prepares the way for the references to creation which are scattered throughout the episode.

The other two references in III which imply the one/many argument in the strictest sense, are from the mouth of Uriel. The first of these, 7:37-42, occurs in the first eschatological excursus in III (7:26-44), and speaks of those condemned in the judgment as "nations".⁶⁵ This implies that the distinction in the day of judgment will be between the faithful in Israel on the one hand, and the Gentiles on the other. But this argument should perhaps not be pushed too far, for 7:32 speaks of the resurrection in very general terms implying that individuals are of more significance than nations. Furthermore, nowhere else in III does Uriel speak of the wicked as "nations"; even in the second eschatological excursus in III (9:1-12), he speaks of the wicked strictly in individual terms. It is possible that the reference to "nations" in 7:37 was a part of a messianic pericope which the author has adapted from elsewhere, and has simply failed to eliminate the original "national" orientation, though it fits rather badly with its present

64. See discussion and references in Box, pp. 93-94.

65. So Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Ar-1, and Georgian. Ar-2 has "sinners".

context, occurring as it does in the heart of III. The other passage from Uriel which implies the one/many argument forms the concluding section of the episode (9:17-22). Here again, the one/many contrast is rather obvious: God has one grape and one plant which he has saved with much difficulty (9:21-22), but he will let the multitude perish who have been born in vain. The use of national election terminology is unmistakable, but even here there is a mixing of terms, for the Latin has "I spared some (peperci eis) with great difficulty", which is followed by the reference to the one grape and the one plant. Thus there is a partial merging of the concepts of national and personal salvation.⁶⁶

Though the explicit references to the one/many argument number only two, it is significant to note where they occur in the episode, namely, at the beginning from the mouth of Ezra, and at the end from the mouth of Uriel. Thus even in the lengthy episode III, which, for the most part, abandons concern for Israel the nation, the author has maintained a grip on orthodoxy by beginning and ending with traditional theology. In this respect, the first three episodes are quite similar, for each in its own way has reserved the first and last word for God's chosen people. Each episode begins with the introductory prayer which focuses predominantly on Israel. As far as conclusions are concerned, episode I closes with Phaltiel's intervention on behalf of Israel (5:16-19); II does not actually end with specific concern for Israel,⁶⁷ but the dialogue proper in II closes with the metaphor of

66. A point noted by Volz, Esch., p. 37.

67. Unless the "saved" in 6:25-28 is to be understood as involving Israel only, but that is not certain. See discussion above under B, 2.

Jacob's hand and Esau's heel (6:8-10); and episode III, as noted above, closes with Uriel's comments about the one grape and the one plant (9:20-22).

Turning to the other references which deal with Israel in some way, but not so specifically in terms of the one/many argument, one finds a single passage from Uriel and four from Ezra. In 7:10ff, Uriel states that Israel must endure the difficult experiences of this world before she can qualify for her inheritance in the world to come. The interesting aspect of this statement is the way in which Uriel links the difficulties of this world with Adam (7:11), so not only does Israel have to go through difficult times, but so does all mankind! That is hardly a suitable explanation as to why Israel has been handed over to the Gentiles. It would appear that what is supposedly an answer to Ezra's Israel-oriented lament of 6:55-59 should actually be considered an introduction to the real contents of III, namely, the dismal state of affairs facing mankind as a whole. In fact, Uriel's comments immediately thereafter would tend to support this conclusion, for he states that "the living" must endure difficulties (7:14), thus including all mankind within the scope of his statement. Uriel then chides Ezra for being concerned about mortality and death (7:15) which likewise is a universal problem. So Uriel's attempt to explain Israel's problem on the basis of Adam's sin hardly meshes with the one/many argument, but rather provides the perfect excuse for Ezra to shift the discussion from the one (Israel), to the many (the perishing human race). Thereafter, until Uriel's concluding statement, the many/few argument holds the main focus of attention.

The emphasis on the many/few argument which properly begins with Ezra's lament in 7:17-18 in response to Uriel's comments about Adam's sin, is not materially affected by the four passages in which Ezra refers in some way

to the people of Israel. The first of these passages (7:106-111) actually belongs within the many/few argument and may be quickly disposed of here, for Ezra is simply reciting instances from Israel's past history when righteous men had interceded for the ungodly. Though he focuses exclusively on the great men of Israel (whom else could he cite?), he is arguing on behalf of the many wicked who are perishing and who could presumably benefit by the intervention of a mediator. So the appeal to Israel's heritage has the effect of arguing in favor of the many, not the one nation Israel. Interestingly enough, Ezra includes Abraham's intercession on behalf of Sodom in his list of examples (7:106), thus establishing the precedent of a Jew appealing for Gentiles.

The three remaining Israel-oriented passages from Ezra in III appear to belong to an intermediate level between the one/many and the many/few arguments. Ezra is appealing to God on the behalf of Israel, but the appeal does not arise out of Israel's fate at the hand of the Gentiles. In 8:15-19, after a long lament about the dismal state in which man finds himself, Ezra specifically states that he is turning from his interest in all mankind, to speak about Israel. He briefly describes his sorrow over Israel and admits "the failings of us who dwell in the land" (8:17), but there is no word about Israel's relationship to the Gentiles; rather, Ezra launches into the prayer which apparently made such an impression on the Christian church that it enjoyed separate circulation as a liturgical element.⁶⁸ It is in this prayer

68. For a discussion of the MSS and the two recensions of Ezra's prayer in the Latin tradition, see BJ, pp. lxxx-lxxxvi; Violet I, pp. XXVI-XXIX. In his text of IV Ezra, Violet I gives both recensions in parallel columns along with the other versions of 8:20-36. The comments of Box (pp. 175ff) are also of interest.

that Ezra's next reference to Israel occurs, and it requires particular attention because of several unique aspects connected with it.

The prayer itself (8:20-36) is composed of three rather distinct elements: first, Ezra describes God's greatness and power (8:20-25); second, in a series of five comparisons, Ezra implores God to look for the good in his people and not to regard the evil (8:26-30); third, he admits the guilt of God's people and of all mankind, seeking mercy for those who have no store of good works (8:31-36). From the standpoint of the structure of the dialogue, the placing of the prayer is remarkable, for just preceding Ezra's introductory remarks which lead into the prayer (8:15-19), is one of Ezra's most agonizing laments (8:4-14), and the divine reply immediately following the prayer would have to rank as one of the angel's most hard-hearted replies, especially since it appears in such close proximity to Ezra's prayer. Uriel says, in effect, that God will not concern himself about sinners at all (8:38)! In addition to the position of the prayer in the episode as a whole, two other aspects are noteworthy here, and they concern particularly the second part of the prayer (8:26-30). First, the five contrasts in this section constitute the nearest thing from the mouth of Ezra to a claim for obedience on the part of God's people, and, secondly, this apparent claim for obedience contrasts sharply with the last section of the prayer which seems to admit that God's people actually have no merit and man's only hope lies in God's showing mercy to those with no store of good works. Perhaps the explanation to the second aspect lies in the possibility that Ezra is suggesting in 8:26-30 that the righteous few--those who have served God in truth, who have kept his covenants, who have acknowledged that he is to be feared, and have gloriously taught

his law, and who have put their trust in his glory--these few are to be instrumental in preserving the whole of God's people, or perhaps even the whole of mankind. This would approximate the argument of Genesis 18:32 where it is evident that ten righteous men would have been sufficient to preserve all the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. Ezra has already referred to this experience in 7:106, and this same type of reasoning (in reverse) is also evident in II Baruch 2:1-2 (cf. also II Baruch 14:7-8) where the presence of Jeremiah, Baruch, and those like them, is said to be sufficient to prevent the destruction of the city; accordingly, they are instructed to leave Zion so that the angels can carry out their appointed work of annihilation. The sinners mentioned in 8:26-30 cover a broad spectrum--from God's own people who sin (8:26) to those who have the ways of cattle (8:29) and those who are deemed worse than beasts (8:30).⁶⁹ Noticeably, Ezra is not calling for vengeance; rather, he asks God to ignore those who sin. To that extent, Uriel's reply in 8:38 is quite apropos: God will not concern himself with those who have sinned, not even so far as their death, judgment, or destruction is concerned. But the latter part of Ezra's prayer where he seeks mercy for those with no store of good works, is ignored. In view of the exegetical problems involved, it would appear that the precise intent of 8:26-30 must remain elusive. Ezra is claiming merit for at least part of God's people, and apparently wishes to see this extended to benefit the larger number. Whether this would include the whole of Israel, or

69. The reference to those who have the ways of cattle (8:29) and those who are deemed worse than beasts (8:30) could refer either to apostate Jews or to Gentiles. Box (p. 181) prefers the former alternative, while Myers (p. 245) is inclined towards the latter.

would extend even further to all mankind cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. But what is clear, is, that Ezra is not claiming salvation for Israel while wishing destruction for the Gentiles; Ezra does not want to see anyone destroyed, especially in view of the undeserved struggles which every man must undergo. The passage must remain, then, neither as a firm part of the one/many argument, nor of the many/few argument, but as an intermediate step between the two points of tension.

The final reference by Ezra to Israel occurs in 8:45. Here Ezra appeals to creation as the basis for Israel's salvation. This same argument has been used before by Ezra in a universalistic setting (8:7-14), but here it is applied directly to "your people and your inheritance".⁷⁰ So, as with the previous references by Ezra, this passage represents a mediating position between the two points of tension in the episode. Ezra uses a universalistic argument, but applies it specifically to God's own people, yet this usage of creation rather than election reflects just how much Ezra's universalistic concern has dominated episode III.

c. Summary: The Use of the One/Many Elements in Episode III

In summarizing the discussion of the possible elements of the one/many argument in III, one can categorize the references which were listed initially into three groups. First, there are three passages which quite

70. Could one be so bold as to suggest that since all men are creatures of God's own making, the reference to "your people" is a plea for God to accept every man on that basis alone? On the face of it, that appears doubtful, but it cannot be completely excluded.

certainly belong to the one/many argument: 6:54-59; 7:37-42; 9:17-22. The first and last references explicitly contrast the one with the many, whereas the reference in 7:37 implies the contrast by speaking of "nations" who will be judged in the end. The reference in 7:37ff is only loosely tied to the episode organization, coming as it does in the middle of an eschatological excursus, but the other two references are determinative for the episode as a whole with Ezra's complaint holding the initial position and Uriel's comments serving as the conclusion. Second, there are three passages from Ezra which call attention to Israel's need, but not in contrast to the Gentiles, and thus are in a mediating position between the one/many and the many/few arguments: 8:15-19, 26-30, 45. In the first instance, Ezra specifically states that he is turning from his concern for all mankind to speak about Israel; in the second passage he appeals to God to observe those who have been righteous, rather than those who have done wickedly; in the third passage, Ezra appeals to God to save Israel because she is his creation, though to be precise, the last reference only says "your people, your inheritance". Third, there are two passages which involve Israel, but which actually are part of the many/few argument: 7:10 (U); 7:106-111 (E). The first passage attempts to trace Israel's problems to Adam, but thereby simply opens the way for the many/few argument, since all mankind must suffer as the result of Adam's sin. The second passage refers to great mediators from Israel's past as Ezra seeks to argue that the perishing (the many) should again be allowed to benefit from the mediation of the righteous.

Attention can now be turned to an analysis of the whole of episode III in an attempt to trace the development of the many/few argument. As the

development of the argument is noted, it will be of particular interest to determine, if possible, just how inclusive the "many" is for which Ezra is arguing: is it the many lost in Israel? Is it the whole of mankind? Or can one even be more precise and suggest that Ezra is arguing specifically for Gentile salvation, i.e., is he polemicising more directly against Jewish exclusivism? These questions will be dealt with specifically after the over-all development of the argument has been traced.

3. Development of the Many/Few Argument in Episode III

The crucial element for the proper understanding of the development of the many/few argument in III is the tension between Ezra and Uriel. A glance at the outline of episode III at the beginning of this section (C, 1) will show that Ezra's comments are almost always of the nature of complaint or lament, whereas Uriel's consist largely of the defense and justification of the ways of God. It is also noteworthy that episode III maintains its cutting edge to the very end. Whereas I and II both tend to lapse into simple information questions and somewhat disconnected eschatological excurses as they draw to a close, III continues the vigorous dialogue right to the end, and even the two eschatological excurses are more integral to Uriel's defense of God. As a means of defining the "many" which is at issue throughout, both Ezra's laments and Uriel's responses are important, for while Ezra includes himself in the many, as the numerous first person plural references indicate,⁷¹ just how broad this group is intended to be

71. See listing and discussion in chapter III, B, 1, b.

depends on how Uriel is seen to understand Ezra's complaints. This in turn can only be determined from the answers which Uriel gives in defense of God. So with the Ezra/Uriel tension firmly in mind, it is now possible to turn to the development of the many/few argument in episode III--the battleground which reveals most clearly the author's inner turmoil.

a. 6:35-7:18 Introduction to the Many/Few Argument. The first section of episode III (6:35-59), consists of a universalistic creation homily from the mouth of Ezra which concludes with a sectarian lament over Israel's failure to receive the world which was created for her benefit. As mentioned earlier, the only possible link of this section with the many/few argument is the fact that Ezra makes use of creation, a theme which receives its proper universalistic application in later portions of the episode. The verses which follow (7:1-16), apparently represent Uriel's attempt to answer Ezra's question about Israel's failure to receive her inheritance. But instead of explaining why Israel's inheritance is delayed, Uriel tells why all men must have troubles in this life: when Adam sinned, what had been made was judged (7:11); therefore, the living must endure hardships (7:14) in order to obtain the world beyond. Uriel seems to launch the many/few argument proper by asking Ezra why he is concerned about the fact that he is mortal and must perish (7:15). Ezra responds by claiming that the ungodly cannot obtain the inheritance although they must also endure the difficult circumstances here (7:17-18). This is the first definition of those who actually compose the many and the few, and they are identified simply as the ungodly and the righteous, respectively.

b. 7:19-44 Uriel's Defense of God. This section includes the first

eschatological excursus (7:26-44) and is actually a lengthy argument by Uriel in defense of God's decision to destroy the disobedient. It is in this section that the one reference which identifies the "many" as the "nations" occurs (7:37-42). It would also be possible to interpret Uriel's comments in 7:19-24 as referring to the heathen nations, for though the rebellious described there are not specifically identified, the nature of their sin bears a marked resemblance to the typical rabbinic teaching which holds that God first offered the law to the nations, who then rejected it. Most striking in this respect is 7:21: "For God strictly commanded those who came into the world, when they came, what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment."⁷² If this is a reference to the heathen, then Ezra's mention of the ungodly in the preceding verses (7:17-18) could very well refer to the Gentiles as well. In fact, that conclusion would appear to be inescapable except for the fact that Uriel has the distressing habit of answering questions that are not even asked, and ignoring ones that are! At any rate, the possibility cannot be ruled out at this point that Ezra might be actually polemicizing against Jewish exclusiveness, rather than merely speaking for all mankind, and only incidentally including an interest in the Gentiles.

c. 7:45-48 An Ezra Lament over the Many who Perish. In Ezra's response to Uriel, there are numerous universalistic inferences. The first

72. Box (p. 99) thinks 7:19-24 could only refer to the heathen. He cites Kabisch (p. 64) in support. Box (p. 105) refers to the rabbinic legends which speak of the law being offered to the Gentiles, but they subsequently rejected it. See Schechter (op. cit., p. 131f) for the rabbinic references and discussion.

part of Ezra's lament sounds like a piece of irony, at least when considered in the context in which it appears: "Blessed are those who are alive and who keep your commandments! But what about those for whom I prayed?" (7:45-46). Ezra proceeds to suggest that no one among the living has been free from sin or has not transgressed God's covenant (7:46). In effect, he is saying that no one has kept the commandments, which sheds a rather different light on his first statement! The cause of this dismal state of affairs is the evil heart which has affected almost ⁷³ all who have been "created" (7:48). There are three universalistic references here: the "living", the "evil heart", and man as created. The reference to the covenant (7:46) probably refers to Israel, but if Uriel would not hesitate in 7:24 to condemn the "heathen" for denying God's covenants, presumably Ezra could also imply some connection between the heathen and the covenant as well. It may be significant, though, that Uriel (in 7:24) uses the plural, while Ezra (in 7:46) uses the singular.⁷⁴

d. 7:49-61 Uriel's Defense of the Destruction of the Many. This section consists of a brief conversation between Uriel and Ezra in which Uriel propounds the two-age theory, illustrating it by means of a metaphor involving the contrast between that which is abundant and that which is rare. If Uriel is consistent in considering the age to come as the in-

73. Latin: "paene". See chapter VI, A, 1, b, ii, for full discussion of the variants in the versions.

74. In 7:24, the Latin, Syriac and Georgian read the plural against the singular in Ethiopic and Ar-1. In 7:46, the Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Ar-1, and Georgian all read the singular. Note the reference to those who have been born ("quis natorum") in 7:45, thus giving the passage the widest possible scope.

heritance of the nation of Israel only,⁷⁵ then one would have to conclude that the argument is still very close to equating the "many" with the Gentiles, and thus again implying that the "many" in Ezra's previous remarks (7:47) specifically involves the Gentiles. Although Uriel goes on to describe the destruction of the "many", claiming that God will not grieve over the multitude of those who perish (7:61), he does not identify the Gentile nations as specific objects of vengeance. There is no question about the fact, that, in Uriel's opinion, only a few will be saved (7:51, 60), but whether this few is equivalent to Israel the nation, or to a select number from within Israel cannot be determined in this particular context.

e. 7:62-74 Ezra/Uriel Dialogue over the Relative Merits of the Mind.

After Uriel's remarks about the destruction of the many, Ezra utters a straightforward lament over the human race (7:62-69). Again the universalistic elements are numerous: the mind⁷⁶ is a curse to the human race (7:62, 64); the mind is a product of the dust like other created things (7:62-63); the human race is less fortunate than the beasts (7:65-66); everyone born is full of iniquities (7:68). Ezra's words, if taken in isolation from the dialogue with Uriel would suggest nothing more than a concern for all men as creatures suffering a common fate. But in several instances, when Uriel has responded to Ezra's questions or laments, he has used terminology which suggests that he understands Ezra to be arguing for the salvation of undeserving Gentiles. This could again be implied in Uriel's response to Ezra in

75. As Uriel infers in 7:1-14 and in an earlier episode (II) with the illustration of Jacob and Esau (6:8-10).

76. Latin: "sensum". See further discussion in chapter VI, A, 4, a.

7:70-74. Here he speaks of "those who dwell on the earth" incurring guilt because they sinned with understanding; they received the commandments and obtained the law, but were not faithful. The author may have intended to suggest the rabbinic teaching that the nations had an opportunity to receive the law first, only to reject it,⁷⁷ but Ezra's emphasis on the universal human dilemma (7:62-69) makes that less probable. Uriel concludes his remarks here by referring to the "inhabitants of the world" (7:74), a phrase which clearly refers to Gentile nations in Ezra's earlier prayer (3:34).⁷⁸ But in 7:72 Uriel also uses "inhabitants of the earth", a phrase which elsewhere refers to mankind as a whole.⁷⁹ Since both phrases here are virtually parallel, they are of no help in determining whether Uriel is referring to Gentiles specifically, or to the guilty among all mankind. At any rate, this passage from Uriel (7:70-74) is the last one until 8:46ff from which it could possibly be inferred from the Uriel speeches that Ezra has been speaking specifically for Gentile salvation. Part of the reason for this gap, however, may simply be that, except for the lengthy discussion of final torments and bliss (7:75-101), Ezra speeches dominate the dialogue up to 8:46. When Uriel resumes the lead role in the dialogue at that point, the possibility is again raised by the terminology used by Uriel, that Ezra is speaking for the Gentiles.

f. 7:75-131 Ezra/Uriel Dialogue about the Coming Day of Judgment.

77. Box (p. 139) again suggests that Gentiles are meant in 7:70-74. See note 72 above.

78. See discussion under A, 2, d, above.

79. Cf. 3:35 and 4:39, both from Ezra. See also, notes 38 and 39 above.

The intensity of the dialogue is somewhat relaxed in this section, at least in the first part which describes the fate of the individual after death in response to a question from Ezra (7:75-101). In some detail, Uriel describes the torment or the bliss which will finally befall a person, depending on whether he has despised or kept God's law. There follows a discussion, initiated by Ezra, dealing with the possibility of the righteous interceding for the wicked (7:102-115). Ezra argues from the established precedent in Israel that the righteous should be able to intercede for the wicked, but to this, Uriel replies that each man must bear his own righteousness or unrighteousness in the day of judgment (7:104-105). The discussion seems to imply that the many/few distinction is one which divides Israel itself. Uriel's apparent allusion to Ezekiel 18 and Ezra's references to the great men of Israel point in this direction, though concern for the Gentiles is also implied when Ezra refers to Abraham's intervention on behalf of Sodom (7:106). The way in which Uriel's discussion of the future torments and bliss focuses on individual damnation or destruction, especially when taken in conjunction with the dialogue on intercession certainly suggests that both Uriel and Ezra expect Israel to be divided on the basis of individual merit, rather than be saved or lost as a whole.

In response to Uriel's statement that on the day of judgment, no one will be able to interfere with the condemnation of the wicked or the salvation of the righteous (7:115), Ezra laments most bitterly over the fate of those who have descended from Adam (7:116-126). The mention of Adam gives the whole section a universalistic flavor, and deepening the pathos is the repeated use of the first person plural as Ezra includes himself among the

lost.⁸⁰ The series of blessings and promises which Ezra enumerates are those that would be expected to accrue to Israel in the age to come, but the prefaced remarks about Adam's sin make the universalistic application predominant. Interestingly enough, Uriel's reply to Ezra's lament (7:127-131) is one of the rare passages in which Uriel explicitly confirms the destruction of those from within Israel. Referring to Moses' command to Israel to choose life that they might live (7:129), he proceeds to describe how the people did not believe Moses or the prophets or even God himself. Therefore, there will not be grief over the destruction of the ungodly, so much as joy over the saved (7:131).

g. 7:132-140 Ezra's Midrash on Ex. 34:6-7. In this commentary on the famous OT passage, Ezra praises God for his mercy; yet one gets the impression that Ezra is not so much praising God as he is appealing to him to live up to the characteristics which Ezra is enumerating. Several aspects of the midrash will be taken up later in another connection,⁸¹ but suffice it to say here, that virtually every one of the seven characteristics which Ezra mentions are those which have concerned him most by their absence—thus his laments and complaints to God. The suspicion that this section is more appeal than praise is strengthened by the fact that two of Ezra's most bitter laments (7:116-126; 8:4-14) appear just before and after the midrash with only a brief comment by Uriel intervening in each case. But in any event, several universalistic aspects mark this section as a definite con-

80. See chapter III, B, 1, b.

81. See chapter VI, A, 1; especially b, ii, (a), (2), and c, ii.

tinuation of the many/few argument: God is patient towards those who have sinned because they are "his own works" (7:134); he makes his compassions abound so that "the inhabitants of the world" might have life (7:137); not one ten-thousandth of "mankind" could have life if God did not give of his goodness (7:138); and only a very few would be left of the "innumerable company" if God did not pardon iniquity (7:139-140).

h. 8:1-45 Rebuffs by Uriel and Appeals by Ezra. Ezra's hopes for a merciful God who will save the many are dashed by Uriel, for in a brief return to the plentiful/rare contrast (8:1-3; cf. 7:49-61), Uriel states that many have been created, but few will be saved (8:3). There follows a long sustained passage from the mouth of Ezra consisting of three parts: a lament over all mankind (8:4-14), a transitional section shifting the attention to Israel (8:15-19), and the prayer of Ezra (8:20-36). The first section is a comprehensive appeal to God to save man because he is God's creature. Whereas the initial section of III dwelt at length on creation as the basis for Israel's salvation, this section produces a similar argument on behalf of all mankind. Ezra begins by lamenting the fact that he must enter and depart the world not of his own choosing (8:5). This agonizing appraisal of the human situation leads into his appeal for God to make it possible for "every mortal who bears the likeness of a human being" to be able to live.⁸² Then in 8:7-14 he elaborates in great detail the close relationship which God bears to his creature at every

82. The reference is to spiritual and/or eternal life. See Box, pp. 171-172, who cites Volkmar; see also Myers, p. 258.

level of growth: man is a work of God's hands (8:7); God gives life to the body which is fashioned in the womb, furnishing it with members, preserving his creation in fire and water; and the womb which God also formed endures that which he has created for nine months (8:8); both that which keeps and that which is kept is kept by God's keeping (8:9); God commands that the members provide milk to nourish his creation, and afterwards he guides him in his mercy (8:10-11); God brings him up in righteousness, instructing and reproving him (8:12); God both takes life and gives it because man is his creation (8:13). After all this, Ezra asks: if you suddenly and quickly destroy man--then why did you make him in the first place? (8:14). Further comment is hardly necessary, for Ezra's agony is so deep-seated, and so far-reaching that it is perfectly clear that he is appealing to God to give life to every creature who bears the likeness of a human being.

After the heart-rending appeal on behalf of all mankind in 8:4-14, Ezra dramatically shifts his attention back to Israel. In 8:14-19, he specifically states that he is leaving the destiny of all mankind in God's hands; Ezra now speaks a word for Israel. This is the first reference to Israel as a people by Ezra since the close of Ezra's initial prayer in III (6:55-59). As mentioned previously, this is not a return to the strict one/many pattern because there is no trace of the Gentile oppressors. Ezra simply laments Israel's condition, going a step further and admitting "the failings of us who dwell in the land" (8:17). These few remarks provide the transition to Ezra's prayer which follows in 8:20-36. Several aspects of this prayer have already been discussed above and need not be repeated, but of particular interest here is the last section of the prayer which contrasts so

sharply with the apparent references in 8:26-30 to the meritorious behavior on the part of at least a remnant in Israel. In 8:31, Ezra rejects any claim to merit on the part of God's people: "We and our fathers have passed our lives in ways that bring death". He then appeals to God to have mercy on those who have no works of righteousness to their credit (8:32), but the following sequence of verses (8:33-36) introduces a strange contradiction, which, however, is not really so strange from the mouth of Ezra for he has used virtually the same logic in 7:45ff.⁸³ He begins by stating that the righteous have their reward (8:33), but then reverses himself by referring to the hopelessness of man's condition: "What is man that you are angry with him, or what is a corruptible race, that you are so bitter against it?" (8:34). This in itself would not be inexplicable, but the following verse (8:35) states categorically that there is no one among those born who has not acted wickedly, and none from those who have existed who has not transgressed. The obvious question is: who are the righteous of whom Ezra has spoken in 8:33? One is again tempted to label this sequence as a piece of bitter irony. Three times in episode III Ezra has spoken positively about the "righteous" (7:17, 45; 8:33) but immediately following each of these statements he has diverted the attention from the righteous to the hopelessness of the lost. Much the same effect is produced in 7:119-126 where a series of six blessings is presented in contrast with "our" inability to obtain them. The form of 7:17 and 7:119-126 is not particularly unusual,

83. There, too (7:45-48), Ezra speaks of those who have kept the commandments, but immediately follows with the suggestion that no one can possibly obey God's commands.

for both are simply illustrating the many/few dilemma; but in 7:45-46 and 8:33-35, the rejoinder virtually has the effect of negating the preceding statement about the bliss of the righteous. The explanation for these conflicting statements from the mouth of Ezra probably lies in the author's own mental anguish, which not only works itself out in the tension between Ezra and Uriel, but is evident right within Ezra himself. As will be demonstrated in a later chapter, Ezra does maintain that man is personally responsible for his own destiny,⁸⁴ but the realities of the human dilemma lead him to question his own convictions, and in the end, lead him to appeal to God to save those who have no store of good works (8:32, 36), i.e., God must save those who do not deserve it. That Ezra wishes to include all mankind in his appeal is clear from 8:34-35, for he speaks of "man" and the "corruptible race" in parallel statements. He then refers to "those who are born" and "those who have existed". So even if Ezra has turned from his concern for all mankind to speak specifically about Israel (8:15), he cannot rid his mind of the fearful thought that the whole of mankind may perish unless God mercifully intervenes.

Ezra's hopes are doomed, however, for Uriel claims that God will only concern himself with saving the righteous, while ignoring the lost (8:37-40); just as the farmer's seed does not all bear fruit, so not all those who have been sown in the world will be saved (8:41). With bitter anguish Ezra retorts that the problem only arises for the farmer's seed because God either does not send his rain or sends too much, inferring that, in any case, it is

84. See chapter VI, A, 1.

God's fault! Ezra then appeals to God to save man because he is the creation of God's own hand, made in God's own image, and for his sake God made all things (8:44). To this searching appeal on behalf of all mankind, Ezra adds an appeal for Israel, at least the text refers to "your people" and "your inheritance". But could it be that the author is suggesting that "God's people" should include all men, and not just Israel? For after all, is not every man a creature of God's own making?⁸⁵

i. 8:46-9:25 Uriel-dominated Dialogue in Defense of the Destruction of the Wicked. At this point in the episode, the emphasis is shifted from Ezra to Uriel. Ezra has dominated the discussion from 7:102 (the intercession debate) to 8:45. Now Uriel takes the limelight for the balance of the episode. That does not mean, however, that Uriel's arguments have now triumphed, for though Ezra speaks briefly only twice more in the episode (8:63; 9:14-16), his last comment (9:14-16) demonstrates that his problem remains as acute as ever.

The next section (8:46-62) contains two main emphases: first, Uriel rebukes Ezra for classing himself among the sinners, describing in detail the joys which will belong to him and those like him; second, Uriel justifies the final torment and destruction of the ungodly. Throughout, salvation and destruction are spoken of in individual terms, but there is a re-appearance of the ambiguity about the identity of the wicked which had been noted earlier in the Uriel speeches of 7:19-74. Uriel refers to "those

85. Note that even Uriel's rebuttal speaks of "loving the creation" rather than loving Israel (8:47).

who inhabit the world" (8:50), the multitude who perish (8:55) who received freedom, but despised the Most High, were contemptuous of his law, and forsook his ways (8:56). Furthermore, they trampled upon his righteous ones (8:57), and even said there was no God while knowing that they must die (8:58). In an apparent reference to Ezra's creation argument, Uriel says that it was not God's intention that men should be destroyed (8:59), but the creatures defiled the name of the creator and were ungrateful to him who prepared life for them (8:60). Is Uriel here attempting to justify the destruction of Israelites or of Gentiles? Ezra's last words in 8:45 are an appeal for God to save his own people, based, however, on the universalistic argument that his people is his own creation. To this, Uriel replies that present things are for those who live now, and future things are for those who live hereafter (8:46), an apparent reference to the two-age theory, which, in its classical formulation, reserves this present evil world for the Gentiles, and the age to come for Israel. If Uriel holds to this view, and it is not clear that he does so consistently,⁸⁶ then he would be inferring that Israel's dismal condition in this age cannot be helped; the only hope is in the age to come, and that probably for individuals only. Uriel next reaffirms God's love for creation, while admonishing Ezra not to class himself with the unrighteous (8:47). Before justifying God's decision to destroy the wicked, Uriel relates the joys which are reserved for the saved (8:51-54). The way in which Uriel has directed Ezra's thoughts to the age to come as the time of the consolation of Israel suggests that the wicked

86. See below, C, 4, a, ii.

whom Uriel condemns are the Gentiles. Support for this view could be drawn from the way in which Uriel handles Ezra's questions through the first three episodes: when Ezra specifically asks about Israel's fate, Uriel is either evasive, or simply affirms God's love for Israel, or appeals to the two-age theory. But when Ezra clearly asks about the fate of all mankind, then Uriel tends to justify God's determination to destroy the unrighteous. The only clear exception to the latter statement would appear to be 7:127-131 where Uriel refers to Israel's failure to believe Moses, the prophets, or even God himself; less certainly, the intercession debate (7:102-115) may also be an exception, for a division with Israel seems to be implied there. If one cannot speak of consistency, then, at least one can speak of a definite tendency for Uriel to evade the issue when Israel is involved, but to defend the damnation of the wicked when all mankind is involved. But the lack of specific labelling of the Gentiles, and the tendency of both Ezra and Uriel to speak of both salvation and destruction in personal terms, makes it extremely tenuous to claim that the "many" about whom Ezra is concerned and whom Uriel chooses either to ignore or consign to destruction, are specifically the Gentiles in some, much less all, of the references in III.

The same problem of identifying the wicked arises in the next section of Uriel's speech as well (9:1-13). In response to Ezra's question as to when God will bring his signs to pass, Uriel gives a description of the world situation as it would be just preceding the end-time (9:1-6). This is followed by a brief description of the salvation of the righteous (9:7-8), and the condemnation of the wicked (9:9-12). Salvation is considered

to be personal and may result from works or faith (9:7). Destruction is to fall upon those who have abused and rejected God's ways (9:9), those who did not acknowledge God though they received his benefits (9:10), and upon those who scorned God's law while they still had freedom, refusing to understand it, but despising it while they had an opportunity to repent (9:11). Finally, Ezra is admonished not to be curious about the punishment of the ungodly, but rather to concern himself with the reward of the righteous (9:13). These comments by Uriel are followed by Ezra's unrepentant rejoinder: "I have said it before, and I say it now, and will say it again: there are more who perish than those who will be saved, as a wave is greater than a drop of water" (9:14-16). The entire episode is brought to a close in the next section (9:17-25) as Uriel justifies God's decision to save the one grape, the one plant, while letting the multitude perish (9:21-22). This closing on the note of Israel's election⁸⁷ implies that the "more who perish" to whom Ezra is referring in 9:14-16 is understood by Uriel as referring to the Gentiles; this in turn suggests that the ungodly of 9:9-13 are also to be considered as Gentiles. This conclusion, however, which implies that Ezra has become the spokesman specifically for the Gentiles is a sufficiently radical one to require closer scrutiny. And indeed, there are several indications that this conclusion need not be considered compelling or even preferable. In the discussion that follows, a more direct attempt will be made to determine just who is meant by "many" in episode III. There are several related problems which grow out of this question which must also be resolved as part of the attempt to define the

87. If indeed it is a reference to Israel's election. See Volz (Esch., p. 37).

"many". In addition, the various elements touched on in the discussion above must be brought together in an attempt to demonstrate how the development of the various aspects of the many/few argument serves to focus attention on the author's purpose in writing.

4. Particular Problems in Episode III Arising from the Question:
Who Are the "Many" and the "Few"?

Of primary significance in the structure of episode III are the elements that the author has selected for the first and final positions. Interestingly enough, these two positions represent virtually the only places where the one/many argument is clearly enunciated in the episode. In the initial position, the prayer of Ezra is concluded with the specific contrast of Israel in the hands of the Gentiles (6:55-59). In the final position, a statement from Uriel claims that God will save his one grape and his one plant while letting the multitude perish (9:22). This is true to form for both Ezra and Uriel, for Ezra is consistently interested in those who are perishing while Uriel is interested in those who are to be saved.⁸⁸ But most importantly, by controlling the beginning and the end of the episode with the traditional one/many argument, the author signals his intent to remain close to the heart of Judaism. For the major part of the episode the author gives himself, by means of the dialogue form, plenty of leeway to explore the fringes of faith and doubt, but he is safely in the fold at the beginning and at the end.

88. An observation made by Gunkel (p. 378).

The shifting of attention to the many/few argument is accomplished by Uriel in his attempt to answer Ezra's complaint (7:1-16); but instead of explaining why Israel must suffer at the hand of the Gentiles, he draws attention to the fact that all men must suffer, and that, because of Adam's sin (7:11-14). Ezra picks up this point, and in his reply (7:17-18), he distinguishes the two groups which represent the two points of tension in the many/few argument: the ungodly who perish, and the righteous who receive an inheritance. The important question here is: who are represented by the ungodly and the righteous? There are several possible answers in both cases. The ungodly could refer to: Israel the nation, wicked individuals within Israel, the Gentiles, or all mankind. The righteous could refer to: Israel the nation, a remnant of righteous individuals within Israel, or notable individuals from Israel and the Gentiles, i.e., individuals from mankind in general. It would appear that Uriel and Ezra are referring to different groups when they mention the righteous or the wicked, but before these definitions are pursued further, it is necessary to look at the answers of Ezra and Uriel to two closely-related questions: i. Is salvation personal or national? ii. Is the Age to Come for Israel the nation, or for a faithful remnant of individuals from within Israel?

a. The Views of Ezra and Uriel on the "Few"

i. Is Salvation Personal or National? With reference to the question whether salvation is personal or national, Ezra appears to speak primarily in personal terms, though he obviously harbors hopes of national salvation as well. In the first instance, his references to creation

(7:134; 8:7-14, 44-45), the evil heart (7:48), and individual intercession (7:102ff) imply that each man must be saved as an individual. But Ezra also cherishes hopes for his people, as is evident not only in the initial prayer which makes use of the one/many argument (6:55-59), but also in the three references which refer to Israel without mentioning Gentile domination (8:15-18, 26-30, 45). The second of these references (8:26-30) seems to be arguing that the faithful few in Israel should be considered as sufficient reason for saving God's people (as a whole ?).⁸⁹ Uriel, on the other hand, seems to speak predominantly in national terms, but on occasion, also seems to imply a concept of personal salvation. The idea of national salvation is implied in 7:10 where he refers to Israel's inheritance; the same conclusion may be drawn from his final statements in the episode (9:21-22) where he speaks of God's one grape and one plant in contrast to the perishing multitude. National salvation is also implied from 7:19-44 where the "nations" are said to receive punishment; the obverse of that is that the one nation, Israel, will be saved, but this is not explicit, only implied. On the other hand, an inclination towards a personal concept of salvation is implicit in Uriel's discussion of the torments and bliss which the souls are to experience after death (7:76-99); likewise in the intercession debate,

89. The concept that the faithful few can save the many has already been implied in IV Ezra by the intercession debate (7:102-111), especially the reference to Abraham's appeal for the inhabitants of Sodom (7:106). The idea occurs at least twice in II Baruch as well. The "preservative" effect of Jeremiah, Baruch and those like them has already been noted above (II Bar. 2:1-2). Similarly in II Baruch 14:7-8, the works of the righteous are supposed to preserve the city from the wickedness of the many. Charles (APOT II, p. 490) suggests that it is significant whether it is the works or the persons of the righteous who effect the preservation for the city.

Uriel assumes individual responsibility (7:105, 115); also of significance is Uriel's reference to Moses' exhortation to Israel to choose life (7:129). The only conclusion that can be drawn is that both Ezra and Uriel are capable of supporting either a concept of national or of personal salvation. No tidy categorization is possible.

ii. Is the Age to Come for Israel the Nation, or for a Remnant of Individuals from within Israel? The answers of Ezra and Uriel to the question whether the Age to Come is for Israel the nation or for a faithful remnant of individuals from within Israel closely parallel those given for the previous question. As far as Ezra is concerned, he virtually ignores the two-age theory, but insofar as he would speak of the bliss of the righteous at all, he would probably admit only the smallest of remnants (7:48; cf. 7:116-126).⁹⁰ Most likely, Ezra would consider this remnant to be from among the Jews, but if 3:36 can be drawn in here, it could perhaps include notable men from among the Gentiles as well.⁹¹ Uriel's position is obscured by his tendency to speak both of national and of individual salvation. It is true, however, that in an earlier episode (II, 6:8-10) he clearly sees the age to come as belonging to Israel the nation; likewise, the references cited above which imply a national salvation (7:10, 19-44; 9:21-22) are evidence here for considering the age to come as belonging to the nation; 8:46 is slightly ambiguous, but seems to incline slightly towards implying national salvation. The two plentiful/rare contrasts (7:49-61; 8:1-3)

90. See further, chapter VI, A, 1, b, ii.

91. See above, A, 2, d.

are ambiguous, and only can be taken in a national sense if one assumes that they are consistent with the other passages which clearly speak of the age to come in national terms. Of course the general tendency of late Jewish sources is to view the age to come as the inheritance of Israel.⁹² In reality, however, it is rather difficult to distinguish between a clear national concept and a concept which involves individual salvation, with the individuals from within Israel forming the new Israel which inherits the age to come. One should speak, then, of a tendency towards nationalism or towards individualism, and in this respect, Uriel tends towards nationalism, just as Ezra tends towards individualism.

b. The Differing Definitions of Ezra and Uriel for the
"Ungodly" (Many) and the "Righteous" (Few)

Returning to the definitions of righteous and ungodly, one can now suggest the usages which apply for Ezra and Uriel. As far as Ezra is concerned, the weight of evidence suggests that by the "righteous" Ezra means a small remnant from within Israel, though on the basis of 3:36, one could suggest that he would also accept a few worthies from among the Gentiles. For the ungodly, Ezra almost always means the vast majority of all mankind, i.e., most of Israel and most of the Gentiles, and he includes himself in that group. For Uriel, "righteous" signifies simply "Israel", and one should consider carefully the possibility that by "Israel" he would actually mean the remnant of true Israel. By "ungodly", Uriel most likely means

92. See Russell, pp. 297ff.

Gentiles, though on at least one occasion he would apparently include some of the rebellious from within Israel (7:127-130). A significant factor which suggests that Uriel means "Gentiles" when speaking of the "ungodly", is the way he avoids castigating Israel when Ezra asks specifically about them. Whenever Ezra specifies Israel as his major concern, Uriel either is evasive, asserts God's love, or points to the age to come. But when Ezra indicates an interest in all mankind, then Uriel hastens to justify the condemnation and destruction of the wicked. The problem of episode III is thus placed in sharp focus when one compares the apparent definitions from which Ezra and Uriel are operating:

	<u>Ezra</u>	<u>Uriel</u>
Righteous:	A few individuals (Jews and Gentiles?)	Israel (A remnant?)
Ungodly:	All mankind (Jews and Gentiles)	Gentiles (but cf. 7:127-130)

It should be evident almost immediately that only Ezra has really shifted from the one/many argument to a new one, namely, the many/few argument which includes a new set of terms. The definitions from which Uriel is operating throughout are precisely those of the one/many argument. For Uriel, one/many is equivalent to Israel/Gentiles; likewise, the many/few is equivalent to Gentiles/Israel. Ezra, on the other hand, alters his posture rather radically, for when he is arguing from the one/many position, he is positing a three-point tension, namely, Israel-Babylon-God, which ultimately resolves itself (in theory) into two points by assuming that God will side with his own people in the end; thus the lines are drawn as God and his people

Israel vs. Babylon. But when Ezra picks up the many/few argument, he changes his points of reference to mankind vs. God. The fact that Uriel does not change terms along with Ezra accounts for some of the problems of interpretation which arise in episode III. When Ezra talks about the many, he is referring to all mankind--God's creatures standing over against God their creator, but for Uriel, "many" refers to the Gentiles over against God and his people. Accordingly, Uriel reacts to Ezra's speeches as though Ezra were the spokesman for the Gentiles--an appalling thought from Uriel's point of view.

This recognition of the differing points of view of Ezra and Uriel helps to elucidate at least three perplexing problems in the third episode: first, the problem of the apparent intermingling of the concepts of personal and national salvation with its related problem of identifying the intended recipients of the age to come; second, the question of who the "many" are from the author's point of view; third, the problem as to why Uriel's answers provide Ezra with so little satisfaction. The material relevant to these questions will be brought together below, but first a word about methodology might prove helpful. An attempt has been made to analyze the contributions of Ezra and Uriel both as separate entities and in tension with each other. This has made it possible both to identify the separate interests represented by Uriel and Ezra, as well as to delineate the tension between them more accurately. In looking at the Ezra and Uriel speeches separately in the first instance, and then together in dialogue form, one more readily becomes aware of the inadequacy of a single definition for the "many". This in turn can prove useful in explaining the presence of a certain

fluidity between the concepts of national and personal salvation, and also in explaining the ambiguity in relationship to the age to come, i.e., whether it is intended for the nation or for individuals. The problem is particularly evident in Uriel's statements; Ezra seems to speak rather consistently in terms of individual salvation, for even when he is speaking for Israel (8:15-19, 26-30, 45), the personal element is very much in evidence. For example, 8:26-30 seems to imply that only the few individuals can save the nation by their merit. The result is that national salvation appears to be dependent on the individual efforts of the few! It is because of this consistent interest in personal salvation on the part of Ezra that Uriel also occasionally appears to speak of personal salvation. This is most evident in the section of III which is dominated by Ezra. One would expect at least some accommodation to Ezra's argument on the part of Uriel, and it would be most likely to occur when Ezra's interests are controlling the dialogue. Because of the dialogue form, it is perhaps a trifle risky to attempt to assign controlling interests, but it would seem possible to roughly divide episode III into sections on the basis of the dominant speaker, with dominance being determined both on the basis of mere bulk as well as on the basis of the interest of the leading questions. Once the terms of reference for the many/few are established by Ezra in 7:17-18, the remainder of the episode (and that is most of it), can be divided into three sections, the first and last being dominated by Uriel (7:19-101; 8:46-9:25), with the intervening section (7:102-8:45) being controlled by Ezra. Now it so happens that Uriel seems to speak most definitely for personal salvation in three smaller parts of the episode which are clustered closely together: the section on the bliss and torment of the

souls (7:76-101), the intercession debate (7:102-115), and a response to an Ezra lament (7:127-131). The last two passages are in the section which seems to be controlled by Ezra's interests, and even the first, though it is a lengthy statement from Uriel, is controlled by Ezra's leading question (7:75). Thus it would appear feasible to suggest that Uriel's real interest is in national salvation, but because of the dialogue format, he is occasionally forced to speak in terms of personal salvation and even to speak of the age to come as belonging to individuals because of the proximity of Ezra's comments which operate largely on the individual level.

c. Acceptance of Ezra's Definition of the Many as Determinative
for the Author

Turning now to the question as to how the author wishes the "many" to be understood, one is faced with two possibilities; a. to consider Uriel's definition of "many" as determinative, and thereby conclude that Ezra has become a spokesman for the Gentiles, implying a direct polemic from Ezra against Jewish exclusiveness; b. to take Ezra's definition as determinative, and thereby conclude that Ezra is concerned about all mankind, with only an incidental interest in the Gentiles who are simply part of the human family. It would appear that b. is the correct conclusion on the basis of the following reasons:

(1) The author has placed an element of the one/many argument both at the beginning and at the end of the episode, indicating that he does not intend to stray too far from his Jewish heritage. Since the dialogue in IV Ezra is the product of one mind, both Uriel and Ezra are part of the

author's point of view. Though Uriel is made to appear unattractive at times, it is his point of view which the author reluctantly allows to triumph in the end. To make Ezra the spokesman for the Gentiles with the implication that he would be arguing for the Gentiles, perhaps with an accompanying loss of interest in God's own people, would be too radical a departure for the author to make. Besides, Ezra never really deserts the one/many argument in favor of the many/few, but rather adds the many/few "complaint" to those complaints that have already become evident from the one/many strand. For all the complaints that the author allows to appear in the first three episodes, he carefully places the more orthodox one, namely the one/many, at the beginning and end of each episode.

(2) The fact that Uriel three times speaks words of approval to Ezra in episode III (7:76, 104; 8:48ff) suggests that in the author's mind, Uriel and Ezra are not in totally unreconcilable positions.

(3) Ezra's usage of the first person plural throughout to include himself with the perishing indicates that Jews as well as Gentiles are included in the many.

(4) The fact that the author only once (7:37) explicitly refers to the wicked as "nations", describing them elsewhere as individuals, or in general terms as "inhabitants of the earth" (or world), favors a broader interpretation of the "many".

(5) Salvation and destruction are predominantly depicted in individual terms. Only by extracting Uriel's comments from the dialogue does one become aware of the fact that Uriel is apparently still operating on the level of the one/many, and thus favoring a national salvation along with a sectarian interpretation of the wicked as Gentiles who will be destroyed.

3. The Seer Undeterred: The Significance of Uriel's Failure to Satisfy Ezra

With reference to the apparent failure of Uriel's answers to relieve Ezra's distress, it would appear that the tension in the episode, and indeed through the whole book, is the result of the author's dissatisfaction with the inability of the theology of contemporary Judaism to give substantive help in solving the problems of human existence. The author is apparently a very sensitive person who is still ready to admit that Israel's present distress is the result of sin, and to that extent deserved, but then he is driven further to analyze the basis for Israel's hopes for the future. According to traditional teaching, salvation for Israel, whether national or individual, is dependent on obedience to God's expressed will. The author asks himself: if Jerusalem has been destroyed for the second time because of disobedience, what hope is there for Israel to attain the future world, when the criteria for success is the same? With the realization that Israel's situation is virtually hopeless, he delves deeper to consider the weakness of human nature itself. If Israel with all her advantages could not obey, then there is very little hope for any of the human family!

This highly sensitive but pessimistic author has used Uriel not so much as the spokesman for doctrines which he opposes, but as the representative of an attitude which readily accepts inadequate traditional doctrine as sufficient; and that can only result in a facile optimism. Thus Uriel is made to appear confident that Israel will be saved, either as a nation or as a remnant which will constitute a new Israel. Because of this basic

optimism, Uriel shows no interest in extending his concern to include those problems which afflict the whole human family. When Ezra shifts the argument from the one/many to the many/few, he is speaking a language which Uriel does not understand. Uriel finds it unthinkable to place all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, in a position over against God--God is with his people and has prepared a new age for them! The few (Israel) will be saved; the many (Gentiles!) will perish! Thus Uriel continually misses the point when in dialogue with Ezra. From the author's point of view, Uriel represents an orthodoxy which is too optimistic about Israel and quite unrealistic about human nature, and accordingly is oblivious to the real dilemma of Jew and Gentile alike--creatures struggling to live. Israel's plight has plunged the author into despair about man's situation as man. Thus the author is a universalist in the broadest sense, but in no way a polemical sense. Lament is not the language of polemic. And it is here that the author's choice of pseudonym is seen to be such an adroit move, for it fits in with the meticulous care which he has exerted in protecting his relationship to his Jewish heritage. By careful manipulation of the one/many and the many/few arguments, he has preserved the appearance of orthodoxy while raising a powerful voice of dissent. As the spokesman for this voice of dissent, who could be better suited than Ezra, whose loyalties to Judaism are beyond question? Ezra remains the spokesman for Judaism throughout IV Ezra, speaking repeatedly from within the context of the one/many argument in the first three episodes and continuing in this role through episodes IV-VII, crowning his service by again giving the law to Israel. But in spite of this active role for Israel, or, more accurately perhaps, because of it, Ezra is also

capable of speaking with startling clarity on behalf of all mankind, and he does so not merely with pathetic resignation, but with devastation: "I have said it before, and I say it now, and will say it again: there are more who perish than those who will be saved, as a wave is greater than a drop of water" (9:14-16).⁹³

With this survey of the first three episodes, it is now possible to turn to the pivotal episode IV and discover how the author overcomes his interest in the many/few. If he cannot be seen to have received substantive answers to his questions, at least it is of considerable interest to note how he uses episode IV as a means of transition from his interest in all mankind back to a basic concern for his own people.

D. Episode IV: Transition from Concern for the Many to Consolation for the One

Even from a superficial point of view, episodes I-III differ noticeably from IV-VII from the standpoint of style and content. Episode IV introduces the first of the major "visions" in the Ezra Apocalypse, and the strident questioning of God's justice is no longer evident; accordingly, what little dialogue there is between Ezra and Uriel is of a much different sort than that of I-III. Many interpreters of IV Ezra have noted that the transition

93. There is an interesting observation by Herbert M. Adler at the conclusion of Montefiore's little study on IV Ezra which Montefiore had originally given as a lecture in the Arthur Davis Memorial lecture series. Adler's response to Montefiore's lecture includes the following comment on the author's choice of pseudonym: "Two more opposite characters could hardly be conceived. The one a questioning, sensitive, unsatisfied soul; the other a practical leader of men, a pioneer in the resettlement of his people on their ancient land, and the stalwart regenerator of their religion. The one all perplexity; the other all action" (Montefiore, op. cit., p. 78).

is marked by the command for Ezra to eat flowers rather than fast (9:23-24), but there is a formal link between IV and the earlier episodes, for just as with the first three episodes, IV opens with a prayer from Ezra (9:26-37). There are at least three noteworthy aspects of the prayer which merit attention and these will be considered below: a. the use of the election theme instead of creation; b. the attitude toward the perishing; and c. the attitude towards the law.

1. Significant Aspects of Ezra's Introductory Prayer

a. Election Theme. It has been noted previously that Ezra has made frequent use of creation as a means of implementing the many/few argument; the actual use of the unqualified election theme by Ezra in I-III is comparatively rare. It appears in the initial prayer of II (5:23-30), but elsewhere it is linked with creation (3:4-27; 8:26-36, 45), so that election and creation appear side by side as arguments for the salvation of Israel. Here, however, Ezra opens the episode on a strictly election theme. Though the relationship to the Gentiles is not mentioned, the emphasis on Israel is sufficiently exclusive so as to leave no doubt that Ezra is employing a variation of the one/many argument. This prayer follows right after Uriel's speech at the end of III (9:17-25) which also emphasizes the one/many argument. Thus, as has been customary in each episode, the author opens with an explicit interest in Israel. It may also be noted that this prayer is precisely like the initial prayer in II (5:21-30) insofar as it makes no use at all of universalistic elements.

b. Attitude towards the Perishing. In previous episodes, the thought

that Israel must perish, or that all mankind is doomed results in vigorous lament and complaint from the lips of Ezra, but here he describes Israel's fate in a rather matter-of-fact manner (9:33, 36). He admits that Israel has neither kept the law nor observed God's statutes (9:32, cf. 9:36). Presumably, Israel deserves to perish. There is no mention of the evil root or of any other element which might implicate God in Israel's disobedience and resultant demise. This contrasts sharply with the prominent element of complaint in the initial prayers of I-III. In episode I, in particular, Ezra virtually blames God for Israel's failure since God had not removed the evil heart (3:20).

c. Attitude towards the Law. Ezra treats the law much more positively in this prayer than he has heretofore. He states that the fruit of the law did not perish when Israel sinned--it could not for it was God's (9:32). Likewise, he admits that though both the people and the heart which received the law will perish (9:36), the law remains in its glory (9:37). By contrast, in episode I, after Ezra describes, with considerable color, the giving of the law (3:17-19), he states that the law was in the people's heart along with the evil root, but the good departed while the evil remained (3:22; cf. 4:23). If by "good" is meant the law, then 3:22 and 9:37 represent radically different views of the law. Nevertheless, both passages do agree that the law could not save the people. Elsewhere in the first three episodes, Ezra comments only incidentally on God's law, though Uriel frequently refers to it in III as a point of reference in condemning the many (cf. 7:20, 24, 37, 72, 79; 8:56; 9:11). The most notable aspect of Ezra's reference to the law in the prayer of IV is the rather

cheerful manner in which he speaks of the abiding law in contrast with the perishing multitude, thus approximating Uriel's attitude towards the lost in III (7:60-61, 131; 8:38-39; 9:22), and also the attitude of both dialogue partners in II Baruch (cf. II Baruch 15:5-6; 48:47; 54:14-15; 55:2; 85:15).

2. The Transitional Elements in Episode IV

As can be seen from the above discussion, Ezra has essentially ceased his complaining and has begun to speak much more positively about God. The aspects about which Ezra had previously complained are still very much in evidence, but his attitude towards them has changed. Thereupon, the scene shifts to the woman on his right who is obviously in deep sorrow (9:38). The text then states that Ezra dismissed his thoughts with which he had been engaged and turned to her (9:39). It is debatable whether this statement is merely a literary device to mark the change of subject, or whether it and the one like it in 10:5 are more closely linked to the development of the author's argument. It has been noted already that in the verses immediately preceding this transition, Ezra classes himself with the perishing for the last time. In addition, it can perhaps at least be suggested that the author intends to mark more clearly the shifting of attention away from the perishing-people/abiding-law contrast with which the initial prayer ends. On the analogy of the previous episodes, this would be the place for the lament and complaint, but here, Ezra dismisses his thoughts, turning instead to the woman who is on the right side, symbolizing perhaps that God has especially favored him. In the passage that follows (9:40-10:4), the woman describes her barrenness, and then how God had blessed her with a son who matured, only to die on the eve of his wedding. Hence the woman's great

sorrow. Though some aspects of the vision hardly correspond to the interpretation, it would appear that the woman should be taken as representing the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. 10:27, 44), and her son the earthly Jerusalem which was destroyed by Babylon (cf. 10:48).⁹⁴ Normally, Jerusalem is represented by a virgin daughter or at least a feminine figure, but the use of a male figure here may simply be due to the fact that the author is using an old folk tale which involved the death of a son. It might also be noted that barrenness can only be remedied by the birth of a son. The telling of the woman's troubles is followed by another transitional phrase: "Then I

94. A number of interpretations have been offered for the woman and her son. Volkmar (pp. 133-134) suggested that the woman represented the earthly Jerusalem and the son the temple. Box (p. 233) thinks that the reading in 10:45 of "in her" was an attempt by a redactor to identify the woman and her son in this way. Wellhausen (*op. cit.*, p. 219, note) suggested that the son represented the Messiah, but this has generally been rejected. Keulers (pp. 96ff) argues (against Kabisch) that the city represents the New Jerusalem of the messianic kingdom. Box (p. 234) considers the city to be the heavenly Jerusalem on the basis of the fact that the death of the son is equated in 10:48 with the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem. Myers (p. 280) also thinks that the interpretation of the woman as the heavenly Jerusalem "seems the most cogent" view at present. The problem centers around the rather fluid nature of the New Jerusalem itself as it appears in apocalyptic writings. Keulers has noted (p. 100) that the New Jerusalem can be either more this-worldly or more other-worldly depending upon the type of eschatology in which it is used (cf. also Russell, pp. 283f). Given the confusion in the text over some details of interpretation, the interpreters of IV Ezra have perhaps tended to interpret the New Jerusalem of episode IV according to the hypothesis of the moment. So Kabisch and Box envisage a heavenly Jerusalem for their other-worldly S, while Keulers and Vaganay (p. 97) find that a more earthly Jerusalem fits nicely into their interpretation of the author's messianic consolation scheme. As the discussion in the text will indicate, the eschatology of IV Ezra is very difficult to fit in with the scheme of the book, and plausible interpretations can be devised which support either a this-worldly consolation or an other-worldly one. On balance, however, the points made by Box (pp. 232-234) seem to solve the greater number of difficulties. Not only is 10:48 to be taken as pivotal for the interpretation of the woman as the heavenly Jerusalem, and her son as the earthly Jerusalem, but the locale of the vision in a field where no house had been built (9:24) also seems to point in the direction of an other-worldly consolation.

broke off the reflections with which I was still engaged and answered her in anger" (10:5). Again, this may be simply a literary device to mark the change of speakers, but the possibility that this transitional element along with the one in 9:39 are more closely connected with the author's argument must be looked at more closely.

For the purpose of analysing the possible function of these transitional phrases, the relevant sections of IV are listed below and briefly characterized:

9:26-37 Perishing Israel/Enduring Law

9:38-40 (transition) "I dismissed my thoughts..."

9:41-10:4 One woman mourning for one son

10:5 (transition) "I broke off the reflections..."

10:6-14 The greater sorrow of Mother Zion and Mother Earth

10:15-18 Exhortation and response

10:19-23 Zion's fate in the hands of her enemies

10:24 Exhortation

10:25-27 Ezra's terror as the woman becomes a great city

The significance of the elements indicated in the above schematic outline should become evident in the discussion that follows.

3. Episode IV as Diagrammatic of the Author's Own Experience

One possible way of interpreting the progression of the episode is to consider it as diagrammatic of the conflict raging in the author's mind, from

his initial mental anguish over Israel's plight (one/many), through his even deeper agony over the desperate situation facing all mankind (many/few), then finally to his return from universal concern to focus his attention on Israel once more (one/many). If this can be accepted at least as a working hypothesis, then the initial section (9:26-37) places the problem in focus: Perishing Israel/Enduring Law. The next three major sections would represent, in order, the initial concern with the one/many (9:41-10:4), the deeper agony over the many/few (10:6-14), and finally, the return to the one/many (10:19-23). The section which describes the glorification of the woman (10:25-27) would represent confirmation that the return to a concern for Israel (one/many) was the proper course for Ezra to take, and would imply a rebuke of sorts for his harsh words to the woman in 10:6-18, i.e., his concern with the many/few argument could not bring the peace of mind that he was seeking. If this represents roughly the scheme with which the author was working, then it would suggest that the first transitional phrase (9:39) is primarily a literary device to mark the change of subject from the general description of the problem to the first stage of the conflict in the author's mind, but the second transitional phrase (10:5) would probably carry more weight, indicating the intensity with which Ezra has extended his interest to all mankind. Alternatively, if the whole episode is intended simply as a literary means of effecting a change of emphasis rather than as a map of the author's mental turmoil, then the twice-repeated emphasis on Ezra's setting aside his thoughts could simply be a means of alerting the reader to the fact that the author is turning away from the insoluble problems dealt with in I-III and implied by the perishing-people/abiding-law contrast at the end of the initial prayer in

IV (9:36-37). Yet the problem with this latter explanation is that 10:6-14 actually represents a return to the prior problems, and the real transition point from the many/few back to the one/many seems to be reserved until 10:16. It would appear, then, that when all the factors are taken into consideration, the episode as a whole seems to be explained best when it is taken as diagrammatic of the author's personal struggles. That would mean that the precise function of the transitional elements in 9:39 and 10:5 must remain problematic. They are at least literary devices, but how much weight they are also expected to carry in the author's scheme can only be conjectured. There are further exegetical points, however, which, if not demonstrating the correctness of the hypothesis suggested above, at least fit very neatly into that scheme. One of the more interesting aspects in this respect is the author's development of the phrase "Zion, mother of us all" in 10:7, a point which must now be taken up.

4. The Author's Use of "Zion, Mother of Us All" (10:7)

The phrase "Zion, mother of us all" (10:7), addressed to the woman, initially draws the contrast between the one woman in grief over her one son, and the larger entity, Zion. Thus Ezra is using a variation of the many/few argument with the "many", in the first instance, representing Zion and/or Israel; yet the verses that follow (10:8-14), show that Ezra is not talking about the sorrow of Zion, but rather the sorrow of Mother Earth. This raises the possibility that the phrase which qualifies Zion in 10:7, namely, "the mother of us all", is a play on words which enables Ezra to shift the subject from Zion and Israel to the earth and all mankind, for there are

actually two extensions of the many/few argument: first, from the one son and the one woman to Zion and Israel, and, second, from Zion and Israel to the earth and all mankind. The mother image provides the link between Israel and all mankind, for both Mother Zion and Mother Earth have reason to be sorrowful. But before the development of this argument is traced in more detail, there are two other aspects which must be dealt with more fully:

- a. the use of the Mother Earth and related imagery elsewhere in IV Ezra;
- and b. the textual problem in 10:7-9.

a. Mother Earth and Related Imagery in IV Ezra

Though the author of IV Ezra explicitly mentions Mother Zion in 10:7, he seems to be even more attracted to Mother Earth as a poetic symbol. The first hint of this mother imagery is found in 3:4-5 where God is said to command the dust and it gave him Adam. The Latin ψ group of MSS makes the reference somewhat more explicit by reading "earth" (orbis). The metaphor is more fully developed in 5:46-55 where God's human creatures are compared to children coming from the womb in an orderly succession, rather than all at once (5:46-48); the world is likened to a woman who neither brings forth in childhood or in old age, but only in the prime of life (5:49). Ezra then refers specifically to the earth as "our mother" (5:50), asking if she is young or old. To this, Uriel says that the earth is approaching old age, as demonstrated by the smaller stature of its inhabitants, for the earth, like the womb produces smaller children as it grows old and weak (5:51-55). In 6:53, there is a return to the imagery of chapter 3 as Ezra describes how God commanded the earth to bring forth creatures. The

mother image is also implied in the two plentiful/rare contrasts (7:49-61; 8:1-3) which speak of the earth "producing" (7:55) or "providing" (8:2) the raw materials from which the many and few are constituted. The imagery of 7:49ff is reinforced by Ezra's response as he laments "O earth, what have you brought forth, if the mind is made out of the dust like the other created things!" (7:62). This lament of Ezra is closely paralleled by the lament in 7:116-126 where Ezra states that it would have been better if the earth had not produced Adam, or else, when it had produced him, had restrained him from sinning (7:116).⁹⁵

In addition to the specific mother imagery mentioned above, Ezra also produces a similar effect by referring to the earth as the receptacle out of which the good or evil seed must grow. This usage is apparent both in I (4:26-32) where Uriel contrasts the harvests which must come from the one evil seed and the many good seeds, as well as in III (8:41-45) where Uriel compares man to the seed sown in the "world" (8:41), some of which matures and some does not. In the latter instance, however, Ezra vigorously objects to the illustration, for it implies an impersonal relationship between God and his creatures; as far as Ezra is concerned, man is a creature of God's own hand (8:44).⁹⁶

Thus the illustration of the earth as mother fits in very well with the

95. In addition to these direct metaphors, Ezra uses the figure of the womb to symbolize the earth as a place for temporarily retaining the dead (4:41-42; cf. 4:35 and 7:32). The womb occurs in two other contexts but is applied rather differently: in 8:8-11 Ezra emphasizes God's tender care for man from the womb on through life, and in 5:35 he wishes that his mother's womb had become his tomb.

96. A piece of anti-gnostic polemic from Ezra, no less!

There is considerable variation among the ancient versions in their rendering of this portion of the text. This variation is reflected in the rather marked differences between the NEB and RSV treatments of the passage. Four of the more significant problems will be treated in the order in which they appear in the text.

97. The Ethiopic reads: With reference to Zion, we are all...." The Latin text of BJ and the Ar-2 seem to retain both the idea of sorrow by Zion and sorrow over Zion. The BJ text accomplishes this by placing the phrase "lugete ualidissime" with 10:7: "Quoniam Sion mater nostra omnium in tristitia contristatur et humilitate humiliata est, lugete ualidissime." Violet I takes the last phrase and places it with the following verse, emending slightly: "Lugere validissimum est nunc, quoniam omnes lugemus...." "Lugere" is the reading of MS A; "lugete" is the reading of S. The "validissimum est" takes the "validissime" attested by both groups of MSS (φ, ψ), Ambrose, and the Vulgate, harmonizing it with the Syriac (ܠܘܓܝܬܐ), Eth., Ar-1, and Ar-2. The Ar-2 produces the idea of sorrow by Zion and sorrow over Zion by paraphrasing rather freely and introducing another reference to Zion in 10:8. The NEB reproduces the double effect as follows: "It is for the sorrow and humiliation of Zion, the mother of us all, that you should mourn so deeply."

the passage is the effect on the transition from the one to the many. If the first alternative is followed, the qualifying phrases which follow may apply both ways, i.e., both to Mother Zion and to Mother Earth, thus facilitating the transition by maintaining a certain ambiguity. If the second alternative is followed, the transition to Mother Earth in 10:9 is made more abrupt because greater emphasis has been placed on Zion as the specific object of sorrow. Thus, both on internal evidence and on the basis of considerable external evidence as well, the first alternative suggested above seems preferable, namely, the reading that states simply that Zion is in deep distress.

The second problem is a relatively minor one, but deals with Ezra's conversation with the woman regarding her weeping. The Ar-1 and Arm. produce a reading which has Ezra encouraging the woman to cease her weeping, while in the other versions, her weeping is redirected to the many, either by means of a direct command (Lat. SMN), or an indirect one (Lat. A [?],⁹⁸ Syr., Eth.). The MSS evidence leans rather heavily towards a text in which Ezra encourages the woman to weep, while redirecting her weeping to the many, instead of just the one. The effect on the interpretation is only a slight one in any event, but given Ezra's proclivity to weeping and lament, and the agony which is evident from the verses that follow, it would seem likely that Ezra would encourage the woman to weep all the more, but for the many instead of the one.

98. The form "lugere" (Lat. A) can be taken as an indirect command if linked with the "validissimum est" suggested by Violet I, as mentioned in the preceding note.

A third problem involves a phrase which occurs only in the Syriac and is retained by the RSV. The additional line occurs at the end of 10:8 which is rendered as follows by the RSV: "It is most appropriate to mourn now, because we are all mourning, and to be sorrowful, because we are all sorrowing; you are sorrowing for one son, but we, the whole world, for our mother." Immediately one is faced with the question: which mother is this line intended to refer to? The mother which precedes it is Mother Zion, but immediately following is the extended discussion of Mother Earth. There are logical problems involved with both options, however, which suggests that the line ought to be omitted altogether as has been done by the other ancient versions. In the first instance, if the line is intended to refer to Zion, it would be striking hyperbole, even for the most committed Jew, to claim that Zion was not only the mother of the whole world, but also that the whole world was weeping because of Zion's destruction. That would certainly not reflect the sentiments of the Romans, nor of very many non-Jews! If, on the other hand, the reference is intended to apply to Mother Earth, one is faced with the problem of the world weeping for the earth, a statement which would be easier to make in the Greek than in the original Hebrew, at least from the standpoint of vocabulary.⁹⁹ Violet II has noted that there is a significant variation of vocabulary here, for in the verses which follow which are dealing with Mother Earth, the term "earth" (terra, כַּיִן) occurs five times (10:9,

99. Perhaps οἰκουμένη/γῆ in the Greek, though in Hebrew, אֶרֶץ/כָּל would be possible. The most natural reading would be as Violet suggests, כָּל אֶרֶץ, and since the phrase does not specifically state that the "world" is weeping for the "earth" but only that the "world" is weeping for "our mother", the discrepancy could be overlooked.

12, 13 twice, 14), whereas the disputed line has "world" (כָּל). If the phrase had been in the original Hebrew, Violet II suggests that it would have been כָּל הָאָרֶץ, which in turn would have yielded πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη in the Greek. "World" (כָּל in the Syriac) would likely be "mundus" in the Latin, representing the Greek πᾶς ὁ κόσμος. But "mundus" occurs only once in IV Ezra (9:19), where Violet thinks it stemmed from a marginal gloss in the Greek.¹⁰⁰ Though Violet has called attention to a significant point regarding the use of "world" here, and on that basis alone his argument for rejecting the phrase merits consideration, he seems to have overlooked the difficulty that would arise if "earth" (כָּל הָאָרֶץ) were to appear in this phrase. Unless of course the reference was intended to be to Mother Zion, some term other than "earth" would have had to be used in order to avoid the incongruous situation of the earth weeping for Mother Earth! In any case, the author's argument is a rather subtle one here and as the discussion below will suggest, some ancient scribe has probably attempted to improve the argument by supplementing the text. Yet as the discussion below will also show, the argument can be traced much more cogently without this extraneous phrase from the Syriac.

The final problem to be dealt with in connection with this passage is the link between 10:8 and 10:9 after the additional phrase attested by the

100. See Violet II, pp. 126-128 for an interesting reconstruction of 9:19 in which the middle line is said to take its essential wording from Ps. 23. On the basis of his reconstruction of 9:19 and in view of the fact that "mundus" occurs nowhere else in the Latin text of IV Ezra, Violet II concludes that "mundus" entered 9:19 as a gloss in the Greek. Accordingly, he also rejects the phrase in 10:8 which would have yielded "mundus" if it had been extant in the Latin.

Syriac has been eliminated from the end of 10:8. Most of the versions give evidence of having struggled to make sense of 10:8. The RSV has followed the general sense of the Syriac, Ethiopic, Ar-1, and Ar-2, by using infinitives to produce parallel clauses: "It is most appropriate to mourn now, because we are all mourning, and to be sorrowful, because we are all sorrowing..."; Violet II, however, in attempting to postulate the Hebrew original, prefers imperatives instead of infinitives in the first two clauses, suggesting that $\delta\epsilon$ was misread in the Greek as $\delta\epsilon\iota$.¹⁰¹ Either explanation would satisfactorily produce a parallel structure for the two initial clauses in 10:8, but it is the phrase: "you are sorrowing for one son" that has been difficult to effectively link with the context. It would appear that the Latin, Ethiopic, Ar-1, and Armenian, have attempted to link it in some way with what precedes, but in order to produce a meaningful contrast as the phrase seems to require in order to complete the thought, some aspect of the "many" needs to be present as a contrast with the "one" son. The preceding phrases simply assert that "we" are sorrowing. This may very well explain why the Syriac addition has been accepted by the RSV for it provides the other half of the contrast: "You are sorrowing for one son, but we, the whole world, for our mother." Only the Arabic-2 among the versions suggests a suitable alternative, and that is to connect the troublesome phrase with

101. Violet II rejects his earlier suggestion of "lugere validissimum" and prefers the reading of Latin MSS MN: "luge tu validissime". Gressmann, in his notes appended to Violet II, states (p. 342) that Violet's text is impossible. It would seem that the text of Violet I is still preferable since the infinitive construction accords better with the text of the Syriac and the other oriental versions (Eth., A-1, Ar-2).

the verse that follows. This has been accepted in Violet II, and produces quite a satisfactory reading; the phrase can either be understood as interrogative, or, as Violet prefers, a conditional clause: "But if you are sorrowing for one son, then ask the earth and she will tell you that it is she who should weep over the multitude who have been born." Thus, a smooth transition has been provided to the description of the agonies of Mother Earth which follows in 10:10-14.

Incorporating the above suggestions, the following translation of 10:7-9 may be proposed:

10:7 For Zion, the mother of us all, is in great distress and deep affliction.

8 It is most appropriate to mourn now for we are all mourning,
and to sorrow, for we are all sorrowing;

9 But if you are sorrowing for one son, then ask the earth,
and she will tell you that it is she who should weep
over the multitude who have been born upon her.

c. The Function of 10:7-9 as a Transitional Element

On the basis of the translation suggested above, the function of the passage in the episode can be set forth more clearly. Beginning with the transitional phrase in 10:5, the reader is alerted to the change of topic as Ezra angrily breaks off his reflections and turns to the woman. With the opening of 10:7, the many/few argument is broached, but with a slightly new twist, for here the "many" represents Israel (and/or Zion), not all mankind as is the case in episode III. But if the textual and interpretive

problems are resolved as suggested above, then the author has provided a clever transition indeed, for the only aspect that must necessarily apply to Israel is the term "Zion" in 10:7; everything else from "mother of us all" onward can apply both ways--to Mother Zion or to Mother Earth. The reader would naturally be thinking only of Israel until 10:9, when Ezra clearly says: "Now ask the earth...", but from there until 10:14 the emphasis is exclusively on the earth, the mother of all mankind, and the topic is portrayed so vividly and with such pathos, that the reader would be forced to reconsider the true meaning of the preceding "mother of us all" (10:7) as well as everything that Ezra had said thereafter.

5. Climax: Final Return from the Concern over the Many to the Consolation of the One

After his relatively brief recapitulation of the woes of mother earth in 10:10-14, Ezra concludes his speech to the woman with the striking words which seem to typify so poignantly both the author's problem and his "solution"--his theodicy-problem and his "theodicy" (?):

Now therefore, keep your sorrow to yourself, and bear bravely the troubles that have come upon you. For if you acknowledge the decree of God to be just, you will receive your son back in due time, and will be praised among women. Therefore go into the city to your husband. 10:15-17

This has been Ezra's struggle: to acknowledge God's decrees as just. And what is his solution? Keep your sorrow to yourself, bear bravely the troubles that have come upon you--someday in the future, you will receive your reward. Has the author nothing more substantive than this as the answer to Ezra's problems? It has to be admitted that Ezra has received

no satisfactory intellectual answer to his questions about the destiny of man and the problem of human inability to conform to the divine will. But significantly enough, after his plea to the woman to admit that God's decree is just, Ezra expresses no more concern for mankind in general. His interest is now solely with his own people. But what is it that turns the tide for Ezra and dilutes his apprehension about God's justice? Is it simply a sheer act of the will, against the evidence which his heart and mind so keenly feel? Perhaps there is a hint of the author's answer in the latter part of 10:16: "You will receive your son back in due time, and will be praised among women." As most commentators agree, the tale of the barren woman is probably a reworked folk story, which accounts for the occasional lack of synchronization between the vision and the interpretation.¹⁰² If the son represents the earthly Jerusalem, as has been suggested previously, then 10:16 could hardly be referring to the "restoration" of the heavenly Jerusalem! Furthermore, the woman is directed to go back into the city to her husband. Since the phrase "praised among women" is a technical phrase which refers to the birth of a child, Oesterley thinks that the reference could not be to the son that died.¹⁰³ Yet in a general sense, it is clear that some sort of (earthly) restoration is implied. Placed in the context of his time, Ezra might be saying: "If God's people will admit that His decree is just, then there is indeed hope for the earthly Jerusalem." Undoubtedly, that is what Ezra would have liked to believe, and it was just

102. So Gunkel (p. 344), followed by Oesterley (pp. 115-116).

103. Ibid., p. 122.

such convictions that led to the Bar Cochba revolt some time later. But when the interpretation is taken with the vision, and in fact is taken as the author's final word, then the angel ends his interpretation with the death of the son, i.e., the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem (10:48). The next event for Ezra is the revealing of the heavenly Jerusalem (10:49ff) and the invitation to explore its glories (10:55-57). The implication is that there is no more hope for an earthly Zion, and the woman's final statement before her glorification could be taken to emphasize this transition, though there is a certain illogic about it: "I will not go into the city, but I will die here (10:18). It may be going too far, however, to suggest that the woman's death-wish might refer to the end of hope for an earthly Zion, for indeed, she is the representative of the heavenly Jerusalem, and her son, the earthly Jerusalem, is already dead. Yet given the nature of apocalyptic imagery, it cannot be ruled out that such a statement of finality, appearing in such a crucial place in the episode might be part of the author's efforts to shift the attention from the problems of this world to the hope symbolized by the heavenly Jerusalem and the world to come.

The verses that follow, contain a specific lament over the earthly Jerusalem (10:19-23) and conclude with another admonition by Ezra to the woman, this time she is to shake off her sadness and lay aside her many sorrows so that God might be merciful to her again and give her rest and relief from her troubles (10:24). Just how seriously this needs to be taken with reference to the formal transition in the book, or to the nature of the author's hopes for the future is problematical. Ezra has already turned permanently away from his concern for the many, a transition which

clearly takes place at 10:15-17; but here in 10:24, he again admonishes the woman to put away her sorrow. From this point on, the Seer's sorrow is itself apparently replaced by fear as the dominant emotion, at least insofar as there are any elements of emotion in the balance of the book (cf. 10:25, 55; 12:3; 13:13). Is the author trying to say by this two-fold exhortation to the woman to abandon her sorrow, that turning from the concern for the many back to the one is in itself not a sufficient corrective, but that one must also turn from pessimism to optimism as well?--an optimism which has as its corollary a proper fear in the presence of the divine?¹⁰⁴ The suggestion can only be a tentative one, but it certainly accords with the change in attitude from pessimism to guarded optimism which occurs between the first half and the last half of the book, which in turn, parallels the change in content from a concern with the many to exclusive interest in the one. Yet even the term "guarded optimism" may be too strong, for Ezra has not counseled the woman to rejoice, but merely to cease her sorrow. This too has its parallel in Ezra's experience--he has ceased his complaining and his sorrow, but where is his joy and his praise? Only in 13:57-58 and for a very brief moment, does the author allow the seer to actively speak unqualified praise of the Most High.

104. Note the description of Ezra's fear in 10:25-37. Later, however, the angel admonishes him not to be afraid (10:55), but to no avail, for Ezra continues to respond with fear (12:3ff; 13:13ff). This feature is likely intentional and is analogous to Uriel's comments in 8:47ff where he rebukes Ezra for classing himself with sinners, yet on this same account Ezra is praiseworthy for humbling himself! So fear should be understood as the proper response in the presence of the divine, even though Uriel appears to tell Ezra otherwise. Along this same line, Peter Haymen has called to the writer's attention the parallel between the theophany in Job and the vision of the heavenly city here in IV Ezra. In both books, "fear" in the presence of the divine seems to be a significant aspect.

The one remaining significant aspect in IV which bears directly on the one/many and the many/few arguments is the confirmation by Uriel of Ezra's behavior in sorrowing for Zion. This is explicitly stated in 10:39 and is implicit in the way in which Uriel reveals the joys of Zion to Ezra in the verses that follow. Finally, Uriel states that Ezra is more blessed than many, and has been called as few have been (10:57). This forms the prelude for the dream visions which follow in the remaining episodes: since Ezra is worthy, God will reveal to him the events of the last days (cf. 10:58-59). But before these episodes themselves are surveyed for material relating to the one/many and many/few arguments, a summary must first be given both of the literary features of the transitional episode IV and of the major effects of the transition for the author's over-all plan.

6. Summary: The Transitional Aspects in Episode IV

a. The Literary and Stylistic Features Used to Effect the Transition in Episode IV

In the summary given below, the progressive consolation which Ezra experiences is outlined by means of brief descriptions of the various elements that the author has used.

(1) 9:23-25 Flowers instead of Fasting, The End of Complaint. The introduction to episode IV signals a major change in outlook. Not only has Ezra ceased his fasting, he has also ceased his complaining. His diet of flowers typifies the brighter outlook ahead.

(2) 9:26-37 Praise for the Law, Ezra's Last Stand with Perishing Sinners.

In contrast with 3:22 where Ezra claims that the law has departed, he now proclaims that the law abides in its glory (9:37). This initial prayer in IV is significant for two reasons: first, it contains not a word of complaint; second, Ezra classes himself with the perishing sinners for the last time.

(3) 9:38-10:59 A Diagram of the Author's Experience.

(a) 9:38-40 Transition. After placing the perishing people and enduring law in sharp contrast, Ezra sees a weeping woman to his right. He turns to her, seeking to understand her distress.

(b) 9:41-10:4 Grief for the One. In a manner which is probably symbolic of the seer's own grief over Zion, the woman vividly describes her sorrow at the loss of her one son.

(c) 10:5 Transition. In anger that may be symbolic of the author's own distress as in his own thoughts, he has moved from concern for the one to an even more agonizing concern for the many, Ezra turns to the woman to berate her for her concern over the "one" when she ought to be weeping for the "many".

(d) 10:6-14 From Mother Zion to Mother Earth. By a clever ^eslight-of-hand, the author allows Ezra to open up the many/few argument by stages. First, Ezra contrasts the grief of the one woman for the one son with the grief of the many represented by Mother Zion. Second, from Mother Zion, Ezra extends the argument further and depicts the grief of Mother Earth over so many who are going to destruction upon her. In the space of a few verses (10:9-14), the author, through Ezra, summarizes his greatest burden, namely, the fate of the human race--the "many" who are perishing.

(e) 10:15-17 Climax: Admit that God is Just and You Will be Consoled. In words that summarize the author's theodicy-problem and his "solution", Ezra suddenly and inexplicably turns away, finally and completely, from his concern for the many to a renewed interest in the one. Ezra's promise that the woman would receive her son back (10:16) may be a hint of the author's hope of earthly restoration for Zion.

(f) 10:18 The End of This-worldly Hopes? It remains a possibility that the death-wish of the woman represents the demise of the author's hope for a restored earthly Zion.

(g) 10:19-24 Final Lament and the Command to Lay Sorrow Aside. In this last stage before the completion of Ezra's consolation, he utters his last lament. By his command to the woman to cease her sorrow, he signals his intent to cease his own sorrow.

(h) 10:25-59 Confirmation, Consolation, and Fear in the Presence of the Divine. The balance of the chapter confirms the appropriateness of Ezra's renewed concern for the one (10:38-39), brings consolation by means of the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem (10:40-59), and illustrates the proper attitude in the presence of the divine, namely, fear and reverence (10:25-37; but cf. 10:55).

In brief, by a masterful use of literary technique, the author has accomplished Ezra's return in four stages: first, he ceases his complaining, second, he ceases to class himself with sinners, third, he ceases his concern for the many, and finally, he turns from his sorrow. All this is accomplished as the author in symbolic form outlines the course that his own tortuous experience has taken.

With this summary of the literary aspects of the transition in episode IV, the major effects of the transition for the argument can now be noted.

b. The Major Consequences of the Transitional Episode for the Author's Argument

By means of the transitional episode, the author has definitely established two new points of reference as the center of attention for the balance of the book. First, there is a transition in content, as Ezra turns from his concern for the many who are perishing to a renewed interest in the destiny of the one. Second, there is the seer's change in attitude as Ezra turns with guarded optimism to the future and away from the deep-seated pessimism which marks the first half of the book. Regarding a third point, namely, the nature of the future hope, the presence of a transition is more doubtful. While Ezra's change in attitude toward the future is a marked one (e.g., he no longer exhibits reluctance to face the judgment), there is no clear transition from a this-worldly hope (i.e., messianic kingdom) to an other-worldly hope (i.e., age to come) as one might expect. In fact, the eschatological elements in IV Ezra are very mixed on both sides of the transition. If anything, that type of eschatology which sharply contrasts this age and the age to come seems to predominate in the earlier episodes (I-III, and to a certain extent in IV), whereas the this-worldly messianic kingdom seems to predominate in V and VI. The two-age theory in I-III occurs primarily as the divine "solution" in response to Ezra's doubts about God's plans for the future of mankind, and accordingly is voiced almost exclusively by Uriel. After the transition, the author of IV Ezra does not specifically

affirm the validity of the two-age theory, but Ezra's mental turmoil and his fear of the judgment to come are concealed, giving the impression that Ezra is prepared to accept whatever the future age holds, be it this-worldly or other-worldly. At the end of episode VI, he openly praises God for the quality of his government (13:57-58), and in VII, he speaks with assurance about the righteous judge (14:32) and about the mercy which God's people can confidently expect after death (14:34). Thus, while it is quite clear that Ezra turns from his interest in all mankind back to a concern for Israel, and reverts from pessimism to guarded optimism, just how this fits into the author's understanding of the future hope remains enigmatic. In the survey of V-VII which follows, particular attention will be paid to the two major transitional aspects noted in connection with episode IV, namely, Ezra's return to sole interest in the one, and the shift from pessimism to guarded optimism. But some attention will also be given to the problem of eschatology and the apparent failure of this particular aspect of the content of IV Ezra to fit neatly into a transitional pattern.

E. Development of the Author's Scheme in the Post-transitional
Episodes (V-VII)

Episodes V-VII differ both in style and content from the preceding episodes, and this at least partially accounts for the fact that there is relatively little material which has a direct bearing on the one/many and the many/few arguments in the final three episodes. The three episodes are surveyed in sequence below, but because of the smaller quantity of material, one summary is sufficient for the three. In addition to the fact

that the material in these episodes consists predominantly of visions rather than dialogue, two other factors contribute to the paucity of material relating to the one and the many: first, the fact that Ezra no longer argues for the many, but is exclusively interested in Israel; second, the fact that Ezra and God are no longer at odds, a situation which appears to be the direct result of Ezra's shift in interest from the many back to the one. In the discussion that follows, particular attention will be paid to the two major aspects of the post-transitional outlook which the author has so carefully developed in episode IV.

1. Episode V

This episode, which includes all of chapters 11 and 12, consists of the Eagle Vision and its interpretation.¹⁰⁵ The vision itself clearly depicts the rise and fall of Israel's enemy par excellence, which, in the author's time, would have been Rome. Since the whole vision represents an attack on the national enemy of Israel, it falls solidly within the scope of the one/many argument. The confident tone of deliverance which brings the vision to a close marks the episode as standing in the Uriel tradition. Most notable in this respect is the lion's judgment on the eagle, related in 11:36-46. Judgment will fall on the eagle "so the whole earth, freed from your violence, may be refreshed and relieved, and may hope for the judgment and mercy of him who made it" (11:46). This much is from the vision itself, but the interpretation continues this same approach with some

105. For a concise summary of the major features of the Eagle Vision and a survey of the various attempts to interpret it, see Myers, pp. 299-302.

elaboration. When the angel interprets the lion's role, there is an interesting shift to the plural object with reference to those who are to be judged (12:32-33). This implies that though the vision primarily speaks about the tyrant, it very easily can be broadened out to include all the enemies of God's people. The Messiah is represented by the lion (12:32) and the restoration which he introduces seems to belong predominantly to the this-worldly eschatological hope. This appears most prominently in 12:34 where it states that the remnant of God's people within the borders of his land are the ones whom God will save in mercy. Although the terminology indicates a remnant, this does not prompt a lament for the few from the lips of Ezra; in fact, quite the contrary is the case, for when the people seek Ezra after he had received the vision (12:40-45), he assures them that God has not forgotten them, admonishing them to take courage and not to be sorrowful (12:46-47). While Ezra states that he too is concerned about Zion (12:48), his intent is to seek mercy from God, and that he does with an attitude of considerable confidence. This represents a marked contrast from Ezra's attitude in the earlier episodes, for while he does not hesitate to seek mercy in I-III, he evidently does not have the confidence that such mercies will be forthcoming as he has here at the end of V.

2. Episode VI

This episode, consisting of chapter 13, contains the Son of Man Vision and its interpretation.¹⁰⁶ The one/many confrontation is prominent in the

106. Stone's article which has already been referred to ("The Concept of the Messiah in IV Ezra") contains a helpful discussion of the Son of Man vision along with comments on other messianic passages in IV Ezra. Stone seeks to find the common ground in the messianic passages in the book.

vision itself as the man faces the hostile ranks of the innumerable multitude (13:5, 9), destroys them (13:10-11), and then calls to himself another multitude, this time a peaceable one (13:12-13). The interpretation likewise emphasizes the contrast between the multitude who will perish (13:28, 34) and the multitude who will be saved (13:39, 47). Those who are perishing are further identified as the "nations" (13:33, 37, 49; cf. 13:41), and the peaceable multitude is identified as the ten tribes who were taken captive in the days of King Hoshea¹⁰⁷ (13:40-45); but apparently there are others to be included among the saved as indicated by 13:48: "Those who are left of your people, who are found within my holy borders shall be saved."¹⁰⁸ This description of earthly restoration indicates a predominant this-worldly eschatology in VI, in spite of the other-worldly origins of the man from the sea.

There is a vestige of "remnant" terminology in two passages where God says that he will direct or defend those who are left (13:26, 49), but the number of the saved constitute an innumerable multitude, rather than the paltry few over which Ezra and Uriel debate in the earlier episodes. Perhaps this explains why Ezra can break briefly into unrestrained praise in 13:57-58: the few have become a great multitude! In addition to this more positive attitude by Ezra, the law, too, appears in a favorable light in VI, for it is instrumental in destroying the wicked (13:38, Syr.), and Ezra

107. Latin MSS SA, Syriac and Ar-2 all have Josiah. For the reading Hosea/Hoshea, Box (p. 297) cites Latin MS M. Myers cites (p. 306) C and some representatives of A. BJ gives "Iosiae" as the reading of SA*, "Yosie" as that of C, and "oseae" as that of A**M. As Box notes (p. 297), the confusion could either be textual or due to an error by the author himself.

108. The phrase: "shall be saved" is attested only by the Syriac.

is commended for being a faithful student of the law (13:54). There is, however, perhaps a slight recollection of Ezra's worries concerning the time of the end in 13:15-20, but he does admit there, that it is better to endure peril and to thereby come to the time of the end, rather than to simply pass from the world like a cloud, not seeing what shall happen in the last days (13:20). Ezra uses very similar language in 4:24 where he states that "we pass from the world like locusts, and our life is like a mist", but he adds that "we are unable to obtain mercy". So in 4:24 there is complaint, but in 13:20 there is more a statement of brave determination. Also, as mentioned previously, in the earlier episodes, Ezra seems to prefer death to the prospect of judgment (cf. 4:12; 5:35; 7:62ff; 7:116ff). So whatever hesitations Ezra feels in VI are miniscule compared to the agonies of the earlier episodes. In addition, the word of praise at the end of VI certainly overshadows any negative nuance that might linger from 13:15-20.

3. Episode VII

Since all the major elements of the final episode center on the fresh revelation of the law to Ezra, it is not surprising that there is no trace of universal concern. From the re-enactment of the voice from the bush (14:1-6), through Ezra's request for the law (14:19-22) and his exhortation to the people based on Israel's history (14:27-36), to the actual writing of the law under the influence of God's Spirit (14:37-48), attention is focused strictly on the needs of God's people. Those who are perishing are mentioned only briefly (14:35; cf. 14:16-18), but not in connection with any complaint; in fact, the contrary is true, for Ezra tells the people that the destruction

of Zion is quite justified (14:30-32). God is a righteous judge (14:32), and in the judgment, not only the names of the righteous will be revealed, but also the deeds of the ungodly (14:35). Perhaps one of the more interesting aspects of the concept of the law in this chapter is the contrast it provides to Ezra's attitude toward the law in chapter 3. There, Ezra's statements are tantamount to claiming that the law is ineffective (3:20-22), but in 14:22 he requests a fresh revelation of the law so that "those who wish to live in the last days may live". The whole chapter is actually a paean of praise for the law, but this one verse in particular focuses on the changed attitude toward the law--an attitude which now assumes that man is quite capable of making good use of the law and thereby obtaining an eternal inheritance. The only possible hint of Ezra's earlier troubles lies in 14:14-15 where God tells Ezra to put aside his troublesome thoughts. These "thoughts" are not further defined in the context, but he has not been afflicted with any particularly "grievous" thoughts since episode IV. Is the author perhaps suggesting that Ezra's earlier questions are still crying for expression? In other words, his own questions are still unanswered? There is hardly sufficient evidence to support such a contention, yet when one notes the lack of any rational basis for theodicy in IV Ezra, linking that with the reasonable assumption that the agony of I-III is the author's own, then one cannot help but wonder if episodes V-VII are nothing more than the product of a strong will which has succeeded, but only just succeeded, in subduing a volcano of doubt--a volcano that is forever on the verge of erupting.

A brief word should also be added about the eschatology of episode

VII. As is the case virtually throughout the book, there is a mixture of the this-worldly element and the other-worldly element. The this-worldly eschatology seems to be implied in 14:8-18 where this present age is divided into twelve parts, with the end-time only two and a half parts away (14:11-12). The times of the end are mentioned (14:9), as is the eagle from V (14:18). All these aspects draw attention towards the end-time and show a genuine interest in the advent of a temporal, if not messianic kingdom, and the same is true of Ezra's comment in 14:22 about those living in the last days. But in his exhortation to the people, though there seems to be a reference to the ten tribes (14:33; cf. 13:40), which might imply a temporal earthly kingdom, Ezra's actual words refer only to the receiving of mercy after death (14:34); furthermore, the judgment comes after death when "we shall live again" (14:35).¹⁰⁹ Another aspect which might suggest a preference for the type of "eschatology" which has lost an interest in the end-time, is the way in which the law is visualized as the hope for Israel. Perhaps the author of IV Ezra is, after all, similar to many of his contemporaries who are prepared to make the law a surrogate for God's temporal kingdom on earth.¹¹⁰

4. Summary: The Development of the Post-transitional Elements in Episodes V-VII

It is now possible to summarize how the author has developed in V-VII

109. Volz (Esch., p. 37) notes that both Kabisch and Violet see this individualizing verse as a later addition to the text.

110. On the attitudes of the Christians and various groups within Judaism in the post-A.D. 70 era, see Jacob Neusner, "Judaism in a Time of Crisis: Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple," Judaism 21 (1972), pp. 313-327.

those aspects which he had moved to the center of his scheme by means of the transitional episode IV.

a. Post-transition Emphasis on the One. The renewed emphasis on Israel is apparent in the last three episodes in the following ways:

1. In V and VI, Israel or a remnant thereof, is placed in opposition over against the Gentiles. While vengeance, as such, is not stressed, it is clear that Israel the nation is to be saved and the nations are to be lost. Episode VII hardly mentions the Gentiles, but Israel dominates the discussion.

2. Universalistic arguments do not appear in any of the last three episodes. There is no reference to creation as an argument in favor of man's salvation.

3. The law is given prominent and positive treatment, particularly in VII. Closely connected with the law in VII is the tradition of the Sinai revelation which further establishes the importance of the "one".

4. The "few" about which Ezra is concerned in I-III become a remnant in V, and an innumerable company in VI. Whereupon Ezra renders his first unrestrained praise of God. The author may not have intended to portray a progression from the few to the many in this way, but it is at least an interesting sidelight in view of Ezra's concern about the few in I-III.

b. Transition from Pessimism to Guarded Optimism. The following aspects indicate how Ezra's attitude has changed from pessimism in I-III to guarded optimism in V-VII:

1. The absence of lament is a significant feature of V-VII which

contrasts sharply with the content of I-IV. Only in 13:15-20 and 14:14-15 (cf. also 12:4) is there the slightest hint of Ezra's previous problems.

2. For the first time, Ezra can praise God unequivocally (13:57-58).

3. Ezra can now claim that God is a righteous judge (14:32) who has rightly punished Israel (14:30-32), but who will also reward the righteous in time (14:34-35).

c. Transition in Eschatology? The Eschatology of V-VII as Compared with the Eschatology of I-IV. A brief word must be added here about the eschatology of the final episodes in comparison with that of the earlier ones. As mentioned previously, no definite transition can be documented between types of eschatology, at least none that would coincide with the generally accepted scheme of the historical development of eschatological thought. If hopes for an earthly kingdom were dashed, then supposedly this was to be replaced with hopes for an other-worldly reward after death. In IV Ezra, however, the other-worldly, two-age system of eschatology predominates in the early episodes, though the messianic, this-worldly type is also present. As far as Ezra is concerned, he is not satisfied with the two-age, other-worldly eschatology propounded by Uriel. So instead of accepting the other-worldly eschatology as a substitute for a defunct this-worldly eschatology, the author seems to have reversed the historical order by returning to a this-worldly hope which he propounds in the post-transition episodes V and VI. Yet traces of other-worldly eschatology are also present in V and VI and elements of both systems are clearly present in VII. It may very well be that IV Ezra simply does not neatly distinguish between a this-worldly messianic kingdom and an other-worldly age to come. If, however, one does attempt to distinguish between two different types of

eschatology in the book, then any transition from one to the other is in all probability not linked with the major points of transition in episode IV, for the glorification of the woman into the heavenly Jerusalem in IV infers that the only hope is in an other-worldly eschatology, but the episodes that follow revert to the predominantly this-worldly messianic kingdom. It would seem, then, that the only conclusion that can safely be drawn at this point would be that the type of eschatology which the author prefers as the solution to his problems is not clearly delineated in his book, and even less clearly is it linked with the transition which is so obvious in the seer's reversion to interest in Israel and in the seer's acceptance of an attitude of guarded optimism towards the future.

Now that the over-all development of the author's argument has been noted, and in particular the progression towards a climax and consolation, a more direct attempt must be made to define the theodicy-problem in IV Ezra. The following chapter will deal with this question. Then, finally, the author's attempt or attempts at a solution, i.e., a theodicy, will form the subject for the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE THEODICY-PROBLEM IN IV EZRA

As has been noted in the previous chapter, the author of IV Ezra has effected a clear transition in episode IV, both in terms of the content (from the "many" back to the "one"), and in terms of the seer's outlook (from pessimism to guarded optimism). This has been accomplished in four successive stages as the seer first ceases his complaints, then ceases to class himself with sinners, then turns from his concern from the many back to the one, and finally, turns from his sorrow and his laments. It has been suggested that in a very general way, the seer's words to the woman in 10:15-16 represent both the author's theodicy-problem and his "theodicy". His problem is couched in terms of admitting the decree of God to be just (10:16), and his "theodicy" seems to be typified by his counsel to the woman that she keep her sorrow to herself and bear her troubles bravely (10:15). But this is only a very general description and it remains to define more specifically both the precise problem with which the author is wrestling as well as the author's proposed solution. The present chapter

represents an attempt to define the nature of the theodicy-problem in IV Ezra. The author's proposed "solution" will be dealt with in a concluding chapter.

A. The Nature of Ezra's (i.e., the Author's) Problem

The nature of Ezra's problem can be more clearly delineated by approaching the matter by means of three subsidiary questions: 1. Is Ezra's problem primarily a concern for present evils or a fear of judgment to come? 2. While Ezra has been seen to be interested both in Israel and in all mankind, which of these is the author's predominant concern? 3. Is the author concerned more with physical evil or with moral evil? Before these questions are taken up individually, helpful background can be provided by looking at Ezra's attitude towards God's blessings, i.e., to what extent is the author aware of, and thankful for, the past, present, and future blessings of God?

1. God's Blessings: Past, Present and Future

In the earlier episodes (I-IV), Ezra is quite conscious of God's past blessings, rarely admits present benefits, and sees the future blessings, exquisite as they may be, as available only to a very few. The places where his attitude to past blessings can be detected most readily are in the introductory prayers to each episode. Whether with reference to creation (3:4-7; 6:35-59) or to election (3:12-19; 5:23-30; 9:29-37), Ezra shows a keen awareness of all that God has done in the past. But he casts somewhat of a shadow over God's past actions by either mixing complaint

with the record of blessing as in episode I, or by attaching a complaint to the end of the prayer as is done in each of the first three episodes. Only the prayer in IV seems to be free from complaint, but even here, the perishing people are placed in rather sharp contrast with the enduring law (9:32-37). Thus while Ezra is very much aware of God's past blessings, this very fact seems to be the basis of his complaint: Why have you done so much for man in the past, and are not willing to help him now? This sentiment appears to be closest to the surface in chapter 3 where Ezra tells how God has repeatedly intervened in the past to preserve his people, and this in spite of their evident wickedness.¹

With reference to present benefits, very little is said in the early episodes, and that is perhaps not too surprising, given the author's historical situation. There are only two contexts in I-IV which imply any appreciation at all for God's present care. The first passage is Ezra's midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 in 7:132-140. While the midrash itself, apart from its context, makes the author appear quite appreciative of God's goodness, the dialogue context seriously detracts from its potential for a positive impact.² The second passage is 8:8-12 which refers to God's constant care in nourishing man from the time of conception to full manhood, but again the final complaint in 8:13-14 vitiates the positive aspects of the preceding verses. This tendency of Ezra to complain also affects his attitude to potential future blessings. He seems to be keenly aware of the future blessings that have

1. See discussion in chapter IV, A, 2, a.

2. See further chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (a). See also chapter III, note 6.

been prepared for the righteous, but he doubts if these will be available except to the select few. The most moving passage in this respect is 7:119-126 where Ezra lists six joys of the future against a backdrop of various sinful activities which have disqualified man for entering the age to come. This inability of man to obtain the future blessings adds weight to Ezra's complaints that God has given blessings in the past, but not in the present. Thus Ezra finds himself isolated from both past and future; God has acted in the past, and will act again for a few in the future, but what is he going to do for those who are alive now? Unless God acts now, Ezra fears that even his roots in the past will become meaningless and the outlook for the future increasingly bleak (cf. 5:41).

After the transition, Ezra looks with guarded confidence to the future. This more confident attitude is evident in each of the last four episodes: IV tells of the glorified woman (10:38ff), V describes the salvation of the remnant (12:34), and in VI, salvation is no longer for the few, but for an innumerable company (13:46-50). This is followed by Ezra's praise for God in 13:57-58. Finally VII places Ezra in full control and he tells the people that God is a righteous judge and that they will receive their reward after death (14:27-35).

In contrast to Ezra's wistful preoccupation with past blessings or hopeless pondering of the unattainable future blessings, Uriel dwells more frequently and more positively on future rewards. This occurs primarily in his attempts to convince Ezra that the future age is the hope for the righteous (4:26ff; 7:10ff, 49ff; 8:1-3, 46ff; cf. 7:88ff). Uriel does not hesitate to admit that God's blessings are rather sparse in the present age (4:27;

7:12; cf. 8:1, 41), an admission with which Ezra concurs, but bitterly laments. Uriel differs from Ezra in one other respect, and that is the reference to the abuse of God's blessings as a means of compounding man's guilt (8:60; 9:10; cf. 9:17ff). After the transition in IV, the position of Uriel remains essentially unchanged, and Ezra as well, more or less adopts Uriel's posture towards God's benefits.

2. The Author's Problem: Present Distress or Future Judgment?

By casting Ezra in the role of a seer who is lamenting Jerusalem's destruction, the author gives pride of place to present distress. Because of this setting, whenever Israel is mentioned specifically or indirectly, the reader tends to think first of all, of Israel's lamentable condition in this present age. But in spite of the fact that Israel's physical demise is the basic substratum upon which the book is built, there is a definite transition point from predominant concern for Israel to predominant concern for the future judgment. The point of transition occurs early in III at 7:15-16 where Uriel asks Ezra why he is concerned about his mortality and about the fact that he must perish.³ It is then that Ezra indicates clearly that he is concerned about man's inability to attain the joys of the future age

3. This point of transition has been recognized by Vaganay (pp. 9, 14) who makes it pivotal for his interpretation of the book. For him, it represents the transition between a concern for national salvation and concern for personal salvation. Earlier, Gunkel (pp. 337-369) had noted the significance of this transition, describing it as the transition between concern for the present and concern for the future. Volz (Esch., p. 37) also divides the contents of the book at this point: 3:1-7:16 deals primarily with Israel, 7:17-19:22 predominantly with the righteous and godless, all mankind and the individual.

(7:17-18). This is the same point at which Ezra shifts his argument from the one/many to the many/few as mentioned earlier. This transition can be confirmed as will be shown below by an analysis of the content which precedes and follows it.

Episode I begins with the long prayer of Ezra in chapter 3 which centers almost completely on the present condition of Zion. While deeper issues are broached (e.g., the evil heart and man's moral nature), there is no mention of the time of the end or of judgment. The same pattern continues in chapter 4 where Ezra laments having to live in ungodliness, and to suffer while not understanding why (4:12). Similarly, in 4:22-25 he laments Israel's fate among the Gentiles, adding that "we are not worthy to obtain mercy" (4:24). If the context were to allow it, this statement could very well refer to mercy at the time of the end, but Ezra concludes by asking God what he is going to do for his name by which Israel is called (4:25), thus seeming to restrict the application to the present time of distress. The questions which Ezra asks in the remainder of the episode are either neutral or show a slight positive interest in the consummation. Ezra asks "How long?" in 4:33, and in 4:39 he seems to imply some regret that the consummation has been delayed. Then in 4:44-46 he again asks about the time until the end, finally asking if he himself will be present at that time (4:51). It would appear that the consummation in I is thought by Ezra to deal more with the restoration of Israel than with the final rewards; hence, Ezra can complain about the delay without any accompanying fear about his eternal destiny. This again introduces a complicating factor into the eschatology of IV Ezra, for, as mentioned previously, the other-worldly eschatology of the two-age theory is prominent in I-III, yet normally, a forensic judgment

is connected with this other-worldly type of eschatology rather than with the messianic this-worldly type.⁴ Yet in episode I, Ezra seems to be looking for an earthly restoration; certainly he does not fear the consummation as a time of judgment as he does in III.

Episode II also opens with Ezra's attention focused strictly on Israel's present problems. In 5:30, he asks God to punish Israel with his own hands, rather than give them over to the Gentiles, clearly implying that when Israel has been duly chastised, she will be restored. The term "judgment" (*קִלְיָן*) which occurs four times in the context immediately following (5:34, 40, 42, 43) probably has very little if any forensic connotation here, though in 5:43, and perhaps 42 as well, the term refers at least to a future judgment connected with the end-time. But in 5:34 and 40 the term exhibits a certain ambivalence between judgment as destruction or punishment, and judgment as the act which saves God's people from their enemies.⁵ In any case, Ezra is still concerned about the present distress of Israel (5:35), and again hints at the fact that he would like to hasten the time of consummation (5:43). As the episode draws to a close, Ezra asks simple informational questions as he did in I, which show an interest in the time of the end but no fear (5:50, 56; 6:7, 11-12).

4. But see Russell (pp. 380-385) for the problems connected with any attempt to neatly categorize a "catastrophic" judgment linked with the messianic era and a "forensic" one linked with the other-worldly age to come. Keulers has over-generalized when he claims that "*im allgemeinen*" episodes IV-VI present the national hope (p. 36), while episodes I-III (with the exception of 6:25-28; 7:26-29; 9:7-8) are dealing with the universal, transcendent hope.

5. See further, chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (b). On the relationship of salvation and judgment in OT eschatology, see E. Jenni, "Eschatology of the OT," IDB II, pp. 127-128.

Uriel's concluding words (6:25-28) speak of restoration and the eradication of evil, but contain no specific mention of ^u judgment. In the verses just preceding, however, which consist of messianic woes (6:17-24), a forensic judgment may be implied when Uriel speaks of God visiting the inhabitants of the earth (6:18) and requiring from the doers of iniquity the penalty of their iniquity (6:19). Apparently on the basis of these statements, Box⁶ also takes 6:20 to refer to a forensic judgment: the books will be opened before the firmament, and all shall see together. The Syriac would tend to support Box's view for it has added "my judgment" to the last phrase, producing: "all shall see my judgment together". Gunkel and Vaganay, on the other hand, interpret these books as ones that contain plagues.⁷ This view receives support both from the statement just preceding "then I will show these signs", and from the list of plagues which follow immediately thereafter (6:21-24). In any case, the reference to the judgment, if that is what it is, is buried in the midst of an eschatological excursus and is not directly tied in with the argument of the Ezra-Uriel dialogue.

Episode III begins on the note of present distress, for Ezra concludes his prayer by asking about Israel's inheritance (6:59). But it is in Uriel's response that the transitional point (7:15-16) mentioned above occurs. From this point on, Ezra is almost exclusively concerned about the forensic aspects of the judgment to come. No longer does he hint that the consummation

6. Box, p. 74.

7. Gunkel, p. 365; Vaganay, p. 73.

might be a welcome thing as the time when Israel will receive her inheritance; now the consummation engenders lament because so few will be able to attain the joys of the new age (7:45ff, 66, 69, 75, 116ff). The transition to concern about future judgment is marked not only by Ezra's increased pessimism, but by Uriel's active defense of God's judgment, which now becomes a cardinal feature of Uriel's speeches for the balance of the episode.

Both the importance of the judgment theme, and the forensic aspect of that judgment become quickly apparent in Uriel's reply to Ezra's complaint of 7:17-18. Uriel begins by asking Ezra if he is a better judge than God (7:19), then he proceeds to justify God's destruction of the wicked (7:20-24). After the brief messianic interlude (7:25-32), the Most High is revealed on the seat of judgment (7:33), and the judgment proceeds with a specific reference to the Day of Judgment in 7:38. The section concludes with Uriel's reference to "my judgment and its prescribed order" (7:44). Ezra's reply in 7:45-48 indicates his reluctance to face judgment, for the "evil heart... has removed us far from life" (7:48). Thereafter, the episode continues to deal almost exclusively with the joys of the saved and the sorrows of the lost, with Uriel emphasizing the former, and Ezra the latter. The future Day of Judgment is the focal point, and the subject is the salvation or destruction of the individual, not the restoration or destruction of Israel. In the abundant/rare dialogue which follows in 7:49-61, Uriel affirms that God will rejoice over the few who are saved, and not grieve over the many who perish (7:60-61). In response, Ezra gives one of his most specific laments over the prospect of having to face judgment: the beasts ought to rejoice because they do not have to face judgment (7:66), and it would be

better if "we" did not have to face judgment either (7:69). Defense of God's judgment again forms the theme of Uriel's reply (7:70-74), to which Ezra responds by asking if "we" are to be tormented immediately following death (7:75). Ezra could not indicate more clearly his real concern: he fears the future! The future reward is the theme of Uriel's long discourse on the torments and bliss which follow death (7:76-101); likewise "judgment" oriented is Ezra's concern about intercession (7:102-115). Ezra's lament in 7:116-126 includes a brief reference to present problems, but this functions simply as a prelude to Ezra's primary concern: future punishment. "What good is it (at all)⁸ that we (Eth.) live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death?" (7:117). This same hopelessness in the fact of man's impending doom dominates the whole passage which concludes by saying: "We did not consider what we should suffer after death" (7:126). In response, Uriel again defends God's decision to rejoice over the saved, while not grieving over the lost (7:127-131). Thereupon, follows the midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 and in this context, it can serve as nothing else except as an appeal to God to be merciful in the day of judgment, even though the day of judgment is not specifically mentioned.⁹ The midrash is very much preoccupied with God's mercy and compassion for those who are now living and those who are yet to come (7:132, 136); it speaks of God's patience with sinners

8. Violet II (p. 99) suggests that $\delta\lambda\omega\varsigma$ was misread as $\delta\lambda\omicron\iota\varsigma$. See further, chapter VI, A, 2, b. The RSV has: "What good is it to all that they...." This reflects the Latin. The Syriac reads: "Of what use is it that all...."

9. See chapter III, note 6, and further chapter VI, A, 1, c, ii, (a).

(7:134), and his forgiveness of iniquities (7:138-140). If God were not to treat man thus, no one would have life (7:137), or at most very few would be left (7:139-140). In response to this searching appeal by Ezra, Uriel simply reaffirms that many will be lost and few will be saved (8:1-3). The next section is Ezra's appeal to God to save man because he is God's creation (8:4-14). Here Ezra continues to show his concern for the end-time, for he fears that God will take away man's life (8:13) and quickly destroy him (8:14) which certainly implies a concern over final destruction after judgment. Even when Ezra turns his attention back to Israel in 8:15, he is still concerned about the judgment (8:18), and as his prayer draws to a close, he twice appeals to God to save those who have no store of good works (8:32, 36), which could only refer to the forensic aspect of final judgment. The ensuing dialogue about the farmer's seed (8:37-45) apparently also revolves around the question of individual salvation, with Uriel claiming salvation for some (8:41), and Ezra wishing it for all (8:44-45). The final three speeches by Uriel (8:46-62; 9:1-13; 9:17-25) all defend God's decision to destroy the many and save the few. The first two speeches use more vigorous language in their condemnation of the lost (8:55-61; 9:9-13), but all are dealing with the question of final salvation. Uriel's final speech does seem to revert to "national" election terminology by referring to the one grape and the one plant which will be saved in contrast to the multitude which will be lost (9:21-22), but this too is in an ultimate sense, not at all referring to an earthly restoration, for Uriel says that God will "let the multitude perish" (9:22), which certainly implies ultimate destiny.

Now as the above survey of the dialogue material in episode III has demonstrated, from 7:15 onwards both Ezra and Uriel are concerned almost exclusively with the issue of final salvation or destruction. While there is just a hint of optimism from Ezra in I and II when Israel's present distress is the center of attention, when the author shifts to the question of ultimate salvation or destruction, Ezra shows hardly a shred of optimism, and earnestly wishes he did not have to face the judgment. But the real test of whether the author's primary problem is the troubles of this present age or the prospect of facing judgment, lies in the author's treatment of these two aspects from episode IV onwards, a matter which must now be taken up.

In Episode IV, three aspects mark the predominant interest as continuing to be that of ultimate destiny. First, the contrast between the people who perish and the law which abides (9:33-37) seems to imply a concern with final events. Second, in Ezra's lament for Mother Earth, he speaks of the multitude who must go to perdition and the large number who are destined for destruction (10:10), again showing an interest in man's ultimate fate. Third, even though Ezra specifically laments Zion's physical distress in 10:19-23, the real crux of the chapter lies in Ezra's attention being shifted to the heavenly Jerusalem, or in other words, to the question of ultimate consolation, rather than earthly restoration.¹⁰

In episodes V and VI, the eschatological problem again becomes crucial to the issue. As mentioned previously, the predominant eschatology of

10. See note 94 in chapter IV for a discussion of the various interpretations of the woman of episode IV.

these two chapters seems to be that of the messianic, this-worldly variety, which would tend to draw back from the question of ultimate destiny inasmuch as it represents an intermediate state between this present evil age and the final consummation. But the author has somehow managed to weave into these chapters not only the messianic era, but the final judgment as well, especially in episode V. Thus, in 11:46, the author speaks about the world hoping for the judgment after the destruction of the eagle; and in the interpretation of the Eagle Vision, the eagle is judged in a specifically forensic manner (12:33), after which God's people are delivered and will continue to rejoice until the final day of judgment (12:34). Thus there is the preliminary judgment of the eagle, which is followed after an interval of time by the final judgment--the judgment which is of so much concern to Ezra in episode III.¹¹ In the vision of the Son of Man, there appears to be no explicit reference to the forensic judgment to follow; perhaps the only hint of this would be in 13:48 (Syr.)¹² where it speaks of the salvation of those who are found within the holy borders, but the context would indicate that this probably refers to the deliverance which is brought about by the Man from the sea, thus leaving open the question of final salvation.

Finally, episode VII, as mentioned previously, also has a mixture of the this-worldly and other-worldly eschatology. The former is indicated most clearly in God's instructions to Ezra (14:8-18), and the latter appears in Ezra's speech to the people (14:27-36) where he speaks of the

11. For a discussion of the eschatology of episode V, and in particular the doctrine of judgment as it relates to the Messiah, see Stone, "The Concept of the Messiah," pp. 296-303.

12. Only the Syriac attests the reading "be saved" or "live" (ܥܠܝܢ) Myers accepts the Syriac addition as does the RSV. NEB omits it.

judgment coming after death (14:34-35). Perhaps, as the final answer to Ezra's earlier concerns about the judgment, Ezra claims that God is a righteous judge and God's people can hope for mercy after death (14:32-34).

It may also be significant to note here the references to Zion in V-VII, or the absence thereof. Episode V contains no reference to Zion in either the vision or the interpretation, but in the conversation with the people which brings the episode to a close, Ezra refers to Zion, and states that he is seeking mercy on account of the humiliation of the sanctuary (12:48). But in VI, it is the heavenly Zion that is revealed (13:36) which would tend to suggest that the reference to Zion in the prose conclusion to V is simply a literary device to maintain the proper staging of the book as a spontaneous lament from the midst of the ruined city. Episode VII refers to the loss of Zion (14:31-32), but no mention is made of its restoration, or even of a new Zion; there is simply the judgment and life after death (14:35).

By way of summary, it is difficult to decide whether the author really intends to display greater concern over the problems of this present age, or over the thought of impending judgment. It can be said, however, that the present distress is at least a catalyst which activates the concern for the final destiny of man. If one looks at the consolation episodes, however, hope for ultimate salvation seems to be affirmed more explicitly than is the hope for the earthly restoration of Zion. It is true that V and VI depict an earthly messianic kingdom, but nowhere in V-VII is the actual restoration of the earthly Zion implied. The most that can be said is that the heavenly Zion will be revealed (13:36). Furthermore, the author's last word speaks of the judgment after death when "we" shall live again (14:35). Thus, insofar as the final episodes give an answer to the author's two major

concerns in I-III, both receive some attention: for the present earthly distress, the answer is the messianic kingdom; for the fear of impending judgment, the answer is a righteous judge who will grant mercy and life after death. Inasmuch as the answer to the first problem is not explicit regarding the earthly Zion, and requires the direct intervention of the supernatural messianic figure, either the lion or the Son of Man, the consolation seems perhaps more apropos with regard to the question of ultimate destiny, but given the author's historical situation, perhaps one should not really expect him to anticipate the restoration of the earthly Jerusalem, for as Israel's situation became more and more bleak, the hope for earthly solutions became less tenable, finally, after Bar Cochba, virtually disappearing as hopes became centered on the heavenly realm.¹³

3. The Author's Predominant Concern: Israel or All Mankind?

Much of the relevant material that is pertinent to this aspect of the discussion has already been dealt with in some detail, but a synthesis will be attempted here to enable a more precise determination of the sense in which IV Ezra can be taken as theodicy.

13. See Klausner, op. cit., pp. 391-407 for a discussion of the development of the messianic idea in the Tannaitic and post-Tannaitic periods. Klausner is of the opinion that the this-worldly, political hope was especially strong between A. D. 70 and the Bar Cochba revolt (A. D. 132) (ibid., pp. 394-395). But with reference to the period after Bar Cochba, Klausner states that "the political element is more and more suppressed, and the farther we go in this period, the more mystical and supernatural the Messianic idea becomes" (ibid., p. 403). Interestingly enough, Klausner speaks of IV Ezra as being "the most exalted in its lofty spirituality of all the books of the 'Pseudepigrapha'" (pp. 349, 365). He also notes how far removed the author is from "excessive materialism" (p. 365).

The survey of the one/many and the many/few arguments has demonstrated how Ezra has moved from a predominant interest in Israel in I and II, to a predominant interest in all mankind in III, returning to his interest in Israel in IV-VII. But just what is it that the author is trying to say in his book? It has been suggested earlier that the author was reacting against a particular view of human nature which he considered as much too optimistic in view of Israel's present distress. There would appear to be little room to doubt the author's loyalty to his Jewish heritage, nor to fault either Ezra or Uriel for the actual content of the individual contributions of the book. The way in which the author begins and ends his book with concern for Israel, and furthermore, begins and ends each episode with concern for Israel, indicates that whatever the author wanted to say, he wanted to say it within Judaism. This would eliminate any suggestion that the voice of Ezra might represent a heretical point of view, or that Ezra would be allowed to stray too far from traditional Judaism, and become, for example, a spokesman for the Gentiles as over against God's people. But once having established the author as a spokesman from within Judaism, and offering in no way an open attack on its beliefs, but at most a corrective, there remains considerable room for the author to speak for all mankind, and here the attention focuses primarily on episode III. There are several significant features about this episode which make it stand out in the book, and accordingly give special prominence to the universalistic concern which is contained in it. First, it is marked by a tone of deep pathos and pessimism and more so than any of the other six episodes. Second, Ezra's brave, stinging words against the decisions of God continue right to

the end of the episode. Third, Uriel fails to offer any effective answer to the points raised by Ezra, so that Ezra's parting shot in 9:15 remains, in a sense, an unanswered challenge: There are more who perish than those who will be saved! Fourth, the combination of commendation (7:76f; 8:46ff) and rebuke (7:15-16; 8:46ff; 9:13) from Uriel for Ezra demonstrates both the acceptability and non-acceptability of the line that Ezra is taking, suggesting that here is the crux of the matter which the author considers must be thrashed out. Fifth, the way in which Ezra's references to Israel in III are made subservient to universalistic concerns, either by linking them with creation, both directly (6:54-59; 8:45) and indirectly by means of context (8:15-17 in the context of 8:4-14), or by linking them with an appeal to God to save those who have no store of good works (8:32, 36), shows how thoroughly universalism has dominated the episode.

In addition to the specific aspects of III which make it stand out, one could also note other features of the book which focus attention on universal concerns. Thus the creation theme from I (3:4ff) could also be mentioned as giving impetus to human, rather than just Jewish concerns. In this connection, one could also cite Ezra's interest in final judgment, which, in a negative sense, is first evident in III, but which continues through the remaining episodes in a more positive light, and most clearly so in Ezra's last word to his people in 14:35. Admittedly, however, the final episodes give no hint that this final judgment will look with favor on those who are not a part of Israel. But perhaps one of the more telling features which indicates the degree to which the author wishes to express a corrective in the direction of a more universalistic theology, or at least a theology which is more sensitive to fundamental human needs, is the author's choice of pseudonym. A

reasonable explanation must be given for the choice of "Ezra" which can be correlated with the content of the book. If, as Harnisch has suggested, the voice of Ezra represents heresy, why would the author select such a stalwart saint in Israel as the culprit? One would expect Ezra to be God's mouthpiece not his opponent. As Hayman has suggested, if the author needed someone to propound heresy, he would be much more likely to select someone like Manasseh or Korah.¹⁴ What then can be made of the fact that Ezra is here arguing against God? Surely that must imply that the author wishes to propound a view which he considers at least as authoritative as the "official" view then prevalent, and he does this by means of an impeccable pseudonym. Tending to substantiate this view of the pseudonym is the use of Uriel to take most of the brunt of Ezra's attack. When the author has spoken his piece, and returns to more traditional theology, Uriel virtually drops from sight. By contrast, in II Baruch, where the gulf between Baruch and God is not nearly so deep, nor is the debate nearly so acrimonious, there is no angelic mediator except in one instance where Ramiel serves in the traditional role of interpreter of visions (II Bar. 55:3).¹⁵

It would appear then, that while the author's sympathy for Israel remains unquestioned, the real motivating force behind his book is his concern that Judaism take a more realistic attitude towards fundamental human needs, and to that extent his real interest is all mankind. In every episode, the author takes pains to establish the Jewishness of his approach, but lurking in the

14. Hayman, op. cit.

15. See discussion of the use of the angelic mediator in chapter III, B, 2, b.

shadows of I and II are the gremlins of doubt which leap into the open in III; though they are "physically" subdued thereafter, there is no substantive evidence to prove that they have actually been vanquished; in fact, the suspicion remains that they are still lingering in the shadows waiting for the opportune moment to strike again. In all, the author has produced a masterful presentation of his doubts behind a respectable curtain of concern for Israel God's chosen people.

4. The Author's Problem: Physical Evil or Moral Evil?

To a large extent, the type of data relevant to this question may almost be determined on an a priori basis, depending on whether the subject matter in a given context concerns the one/many argument or the many/few argument. This same division of material also tends to determine whether the author is concerned about present distress or future judgment. Thus when the subject is Israel, rather predictably, the predominant interest is present distress, with a heavier emphasis on physical evil. On the other hand, when the subject is all mankind, the predominant concern tends to be the future judgment which in turn implies a much greater interest in moral evil. Similarly, the contexts which indicate Ezra's attitude towards God's future blessings may also be categorized, for in I and II where concern for Israel is dominant, Ezra is slightly more optimistic about the prospects for the future, but when attention is shifted to all mankind, he becomes very pessimistic and fearful of the future. It is interesting to note in this respect the contrast with II Baruch, for there the agony is almost exclusively over Israel; accordingly, the attention is focused on present distress, and physical evil. There is

very little distress over man's inability to obey, and the seer rather quickly gains confidence in God's future blessings. The lines are not altogether clearly drawn in IV Ezra, however, for even where there is primary concern for Israel and her present distress, thus indicating a predominant interest in physical evil, there is also clear evidence of a concern about man's moral nature and man's inability to conform to God's will. This also affects Ezra's attitude towards God's past dealings with man and colors Ezra's recital of salvation history in chapter 3.

Although some of the relevant passages will be dealt with more thoroughly in another connection, for purposes of defining the extent of Ezra's theodicy-problem, it is necessary to determine whether Ezra is more interested in physical evil or in moral evil. Since the evidence tends to parallel that of the previous "pairs" (present distress/future judgment; Israel/all mankind) an attempt has been made to minimize the problem of repetition by noting primarily the atypical passages in both strands of material. Thus, the episodes in which the interest in Israel predominates (I, II, IV-VII) are analyzed below for traces of concern about moral evil. Similarly, in III where the subject is primarily all mankind, evidence of concern about physical evil will be noted. Once this has been done, a further question must be raised: to what extent does the author envisage a quantitative and/or qualitative increase in physical and/or moral evil as time progresses? This will provide additional material which will be brought together with the other aspects touched on in this chapter in a final summary attempt to define the theodicy-problem in IV Ezra.

a. Evidence of Concern about Moral Evil in the Israel-dominated
Episodes (I, II, IV-VII)

Of the episodes which are concerned primarily with Israel, episode I shows the greatest interest in the problem of moral evil. In the initial prayer of chapter 3, the subject is ostensibly Israel's fate in the hands of the Gentiles, but Ezra apparently assumes that the destruction of Israel is the result of sin, so he shows an active interest in man's ability or inability to obey. In the first part of the chapter (3:1-27), he notes man's repeated disobedience and God's repeated acts of salvation. The first example is Adam: God gave him just one command, and he transgressed it (3:7). Then the descendants of Adam were wicked, but God did not hinder them (3:8). Noah was saved (3:11), but his descendants were even more wicked (3:12); even so, God chose Abraham (3:13) from whom came Isaac (3:15), whose son, Jacob, became a great multitude (3:16), and to this multitude God gave the law (3:17-19). Yet even these could not obey, for they had the evil heart just like Adam, so the good departed and the evil remained (3:20-22). Again, God chose David (3:23) who built God's city, but the inhabitants of the city sinned just like Adam and his descendants, so God handed them over into the hands of his enemies (3:25-27). In all this, the author seems to be struggling to find some means of explaining God's dealings with man, as well as a means of explaining man's repeated rebellion. Twice, Ezra virtually accuses God of complicity in the crime: God did not hinder the ante-diluvians from sinning (3:8), and he did not remove the evil root so the law could take root (3:20). In two additional passages, Ezra seems to be accusing God of inconsistency: God promised that he would never forsake the descendants of Abraham (3:15), and

God even handed Israel over to his own enemies, not just Israel's enemies (3:27).

In the latter part of chapter 3, Ezra takes a different approach, comparing the behavior of Israel and Babylon (3:28-34). On this basis, Israel scores higher than Babylon, or more accurately, does not score as low as Babylon, but in 3:35, if the reconstruction suggested earlier is accepted,¹⁶ Ezra generalizes and claims that no man has not sinned, and no nation has rightly kept God's commandments. So while Ezra is concerned about the present condition of Israel, his concern goes deeper than the mere physical loss of the city; he is concerned about man's continued and repeated failures to obey God's command, and God's apparent inability or unwillingness to cure the basic problem. God has on several occasions rescued his people in spite of rebellion, but on that basis, God ought to also save Israel now, for she has sinned in the same way as Adam and all his descendants.

Chapter 4 also indicates the author's concern for moral evil. In 4:4 Uriel picks up Ezra's closing comments and promises to tell why the heart is evil. In two other passages in chapter 4, Ezra includes a brief hint about moral evil in contexts that are primarily dealing with physical evil: in 4:12 he asks why "we" must live in ungodliness, and in 4:24 he wonders why "we" are not worthy to obtain mercy. Uriel also seems to be referring to moral evil when he speaks of the grain of evil seed sown in Adam's heart bringing forth so much fruit of ungodliness (4:30-31). In response, Ezra asks: "Why are our years few and evil?" (4:33), which probably contains

16. See discussion in chapter IV, A, 2, d.

an implication of physical as well as moral evil, but the latter is further emphasized in 4:38 where Ezra claims that all of "us" are full of ungodliness and wonders if the sins of the earth's inhabitants can delay the consummation.

It would appear, then, that both in chapters 3 and 4, Ezra is seeking to understand the relationship of physical evil and moral evil. For the most part, he seems to have accepted a retributitional scheme, assuming that Israel's demise is God's judgment on sin. But Ezra is not about to accept this formula, at least not without a struggle, so he first points out how God has saved man in the past, in spite of sin; second, he complains that God could have done more in making it possible for man to obey; and third, he claims that if Israel is being punished for sin, than God certainly is not being very fair about it, because Babylon is no better than Israel, yet she is prospering, while Israel languishes.

In contrast with episode I, there seems to be very little evidence of concern about moral evil in II. The only really explicit reference is at the close of the episode where Uriel speaks of restoration, and of the "heart of the earth's inhabitants" being changed and converted to a different spirit (6:26).

In the consolation episodes of IV-VII, the traces of concern about moral evil are likewise infrequent. Episode IV twice touches briefly on the problem of moral evil. In the introductory prayer, Ezra refers to the people who did not obey God's law and therefore perish (9:32-36), and in his lament over Mother Earth he mentions those who go to perdition and are destined for destruction (10:10). In episodes V and VI, the passages which touch on moral evil are dealing with the wickedness of the eagle in V

(11:40-42; 12:31-33) and the wicked multitude in VI (13:31, 37-38). The moral faults of the eagle are more clearly specified than are those of the multitude, but in neither case is the discussion of moral evil directly pertinent to the problems which disturb Ezra in I-III. In episode VII, however, there seems to be a harking back to the specific problems of the earlier episodes. In God's initial instructions to Ezra (14:3-18), while there seems to be a reference to the loss of physical vitality in the end-time (14:10), the predominant emphasis seems to be on the moral wickedness which will precede the consummation: worse evils will be done than are happening now (14:16), and as the world grows weaker, evils are multiplied among its inhabitants (14:17); truth will depart and falsehood will draw near (14:18). But as for Ezra himself, he is to put away mortal thoughts, cast away the burdens of man, divest himself of his weak nature, lay aside his most grievous thoughts, and hasten to escape (14:14-15). Both the immediate context, and Ezra's "grievous" thoughts of I-III suggest that it is moral evil that concerns him. This also is implied in Ezra's request for the law that "those who wish to live in the last days may live" (14:22). This could hardly be a reference to mere physical life, but to the only kind of life for which the law is really pertinent, namely, the righteous life which qualifies one for eternal life. Then in Ezra's final address to the people, he is again concerned with moral problems: the transgression of the law by God's people (14:30-31), and the loss of Zion because of Israel's transgression (14:32). The people must rule over their minds, and discipline their hearts so that they may be preserved and receive mercy after death (14:34), for in the judgment the names of the righteous and the deeds of the

ungodly will be made manifest (14:35). So while the physical distress of Zion still provides the background for chapter 14, Ezra is preoccupied with man's moral behavior, rather than his physical environment.

b. Evidence for Concern about Physical Evil in the
Universalistic Episode III

Turning now to episode III, and looking for traces of concern for physical evil rather than moral evil, one can find very little there which is not clearly subservient to the predominant interest in moral evil. The introductory prayer closes with an appeal for Israel's inheritance to be given to her (6:59), implying thereby primarily a concern with physical evil. Uriel's reply, however, is more problematical. He is trying to explain why Israel must have difficult times before she can receive her inheritance, though in effect, by referring to Adam's sin (7:11), he simply explains why all men have trouble, not just Israel. The question is whether Uriel understands the results of Adam's sin to be simply a reduction in the physical goodness of the world, or a twisting of man's moral nature as well. The most likely text of 7:12 gives the following results of Adam's sin: The entrances¹⁷ of this world were made narrow, sorrowful, toilsome,¹⁸ full of perils, and

17. Latin, Syriac, Georgian, Ar-2 and Arm. all have "entrances". Eth. and Ar-1 have "ways" which Box (p. 102) prefers (*ὁδοί* instead of *εἰσοδοί*) as does Myers (p. 206).

18. The Latin has an addition here which may also belong in the text: "few and evil" (*paucae autem et malae*). The Ethiopic supports this reading while the Georgian makes the "evil" into a qualifying adjective modifying the previous term: (*labor*) *malus, pauci et....* The Syr., Ar-1, Ar-2, and Arm. omit the phrase. Even if the phrase is original, it would shed no light on the question of whether Adam's sin was thought to introduce a moral bent to man's nature.

involved in great dangers.¹⁹ These judgments certainly give the predominant impression of referring to physical evil and probably imply no more than the results of Adam's sin as given in Genesis 3.

After the transition to concern for all mankind and hence a primary concern with final judgment and moral evil, there are only brief references to physical evil, at least insofar as it is something which concerns man in the present. In 7:18, Ezra refers to the ungodly who suffer difficult circumstances here, while not enjoying the easier ones to come. In effect, he refers to the physical evil of this present age as part of his argument to convince Uriel that God's method of dealing with moral evil is both inadequate and unfair. Thus physical evil is simply used in a secondary sense, as a means of focusing attention on the real problem, moral evil. In Uriel's reply (7:19-44), there is a reference to those who are to be "delivered from the evils which I have foretold" (7:27). The context is of no assistance in determining whether this is to be understood as physical or moral evil or both, but in all probability, if this is a reference to the messianic woes as it appears to be, then it would involve both physical and moral evil (cf. 5:2; 6:24; 14:16-18). In 7:76 Ezra shows concern about torment after death, but such concern for "physical" suffering in the world to come is quite a different matter than concern for poor living conditions now; in fact, it is a direct outgrowth of Ezra's concern for moral evil: since man is incapable of right living here, there is no other alternative but torment there. In

19. The Syriac has an addition to the text here ܕܠܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܬܐ . Box (p. 102) suggests that the underlying Greek text might have been $\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \tau\alpha\iota\varsigma\ \alpha\sigma\theta\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\tau\eta\eta\gamma\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$, but ܕܠܝܬܐ can also be translated simply as "sufferings", or "sorrows", as well as "passions", so it need not refer to moral evil as Box suggests. In any case, the phrase occurs only in the Syriac which makes its authenticity suspect.

7:118, there is a most interesting passage which must be taken up later in greater detail,²⁰ but here it is sufficient to note the reference to the results of Adam's sin: "O Adam, what have you done! For though it was you who sinned, the fall (casus / כְּחַטָּא) was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants." The heavy theological coloring which now adheres to the English word "fall" (Latin: casus) unfairly prejudices the reader towards an interpretation which includes moral evil as the result of Adam's sin. Nevertheless, this interpretation is supported by the list of moral faults which follows in 7:119-126, but for the present it is sufficient to note that "fall" may include both physical and moral elements as the result of Adam's sin. One final reference must be noted in III, and that is 9:7-8 where Uriel states that those who are saved and who escape on the basis of works or faith will be able to survive the dangers that have been predicted. It would appear that this is a reference to the fact that moral or religious qualities are necessary in order to escape the physical dangers connected with the messianic woes. The context confirms that physical dangers are indeed in the author's mind (9:3). The concept of increased moral pollution as a feature of the messianic woes is not really explicit in this context, but is certainly so in similar passages elsewhere in IV Ezra (cf. 5:2; 6:24; 14:16-18).

20. See chapter VI, A, 2.

c. Conclusion: A Dominant Concern for Moral Evil

By way of conclusion, it must be noted how the concern for moral evil has permeated the Israel-dominated episodes (particularly I, IV, VII) much more thoroughly than the concern for physical evil has done in the pivotal universalistic episode III. This tends to confirm the suggestion made earlier that the author's real concern is the weakness of human nature--a problem affecting all mankind. Not only is this concern about man's moral nature evident when Ezra is speaking about man in general as a creature of God, but it is also very much in evidence when he is speaking about God's people, Israel. It can be said then, with a fair degree of certainty, that the problem of moral evil is the author's chief concern, and the lament over Zion's physical distress simply provides the occasion and setting for the author's lament. But now a closely related question must be discussed, and that is whether or not the author considers evil, both physical and moral, to be on the increase, either in a qualitative or quantitative sense.

5. Is Evil Increasing?²¹

At the outset, it must be stated that a clear distinction between quality

21. To a certain extent, the significance of this question should be seen in connection with Harnisch's contention that Ezra's skepticism is based on the idea that sin is not only inevitable, but that its power is becoming progressively stronger as time passes. On p. 32, Harnisch speaks of "die lawinenartig anwachsende Macht der Sünde und das allen Menschen innewohnende böse Herz". The one passage which can be called upon directly to support this contention (i.e., 3:12) is discussed by Harnisch on p. 50. His further statement that the seer accepts "eine Steigerung der allgemeinen Sündenverfallenheit" which increases from generation to generation (p. 51), is supported only by a cross reference to the metaphor of the evil seed in 4:30 (Uriel!). The discussion in the text above will examine more closely, first, the question of whether or not the concept of a "Progressivität der Sünde" (ibid.) is prominent in IV Ezra and, second, what part such a concept might play in the author's scheme.

and quantity is difficult to maintain when speaking of the problem of evil. While there would appear to be a distinct qualitative difference between a prick in the finger and the loss of a leg, or between the crime of theft and that of murder, it is much more difficult to maintain the distinction when speaking of conditions of life in general or the moral tone of a whole generation or race. A simple quantitative decrease in the goods of life seems to affect directly, if not proportionally, the quality of life. Likewise, a simple quantitative increase in the number of moral deviates seems to reflect a corresponding decrease in the quality of morality in a given community. Given this almost inseparable link between quantity and quality when dealing with the problem of evil, in the discussion below, the two aspects are dealt with together under the one question: is evil on the increase?

There is a temporal distinction, however, which does seem to be pertinent to the discussion here, and that involves the time-span for the whole of the present age ever since the first sin, as distinguished from that period of time just before the end of the age during which the messianic woes are to take place. In other words, the concern here will be to determine whether or not the author of IV Ezra would say that evil has been growing consistently more widespread ever since the first sin. It is fairly evident that he would accept a drastic deterioration of the situation during the period when the messianic woes hold sway, but it is not so clear that he would say unequivocally that this deterioration has been a continuing process through time.

a. Increase in Physical Evil

Only in 7:11-14 is physical evil discussed with reference to the entire time-span of the present age without shading into a discussion of the end-time. In this passage, Uriel is describing the effects which resulted from the "judgment" against the earth following Adam's sin, but there is no indication that the evil results of his sin have multiplied since that initial judgment. In fact, Uriel seems to specify a once-for-all judgment as a consequence of Adam's sin when he states simply, that, when Adam transgressed, "what had been made was judged" (7:11). Some of the passages, however, which speak of evil increasing at the end-time may also be referring to a condition that applies to a broader period of time than just the time of the messianic woes. But first, those passages may be noted which seem to refer rather exclusively to the time of the messianic woes, or at least to the time of the end.²²

5:1-12 speaks of an increase in moral evil (5:2, 10) and strongly implies the same for physical evil. The passage as a whole is a description of the messianic woes so would apply only to the end-time.

22. It is not always easy to distinguish between different aspects of the end-time events. For example, IV Ezra 13:5, 33f are cited by Russell (p. 193) as belonging to the tradition of the Gog and Magog battle against the nations. Yet the turmoil connected with this "battle" is at times difficult to distinguish from the evils linked with the messianic woes (i.e., birth-pangs of the Messiah). Rosenthal (p. 48) sees three stages in the last-day events: first, the birth-pangs of the Messiah; second, the rule of the Messiah with the battle against the heathen (Battle of Gog and Magog); third, the Great Day of Judgment and the resurrection. He sees the judgment after death as taking place before the Great Day of Judgment, i.e., when each man dies. In actual practice, however, it is not always possible to distinguish between the events. In the discussion above, no attempt is made to distinguish between the "woes" and the "battle" since the point at issue is the whole of human history as over against the Endzeit itself; "messianic woes" is used as a general phrase to refer to the turmoil connected with the advent of the Endzeit.

6:17-24 is a continuation of the previous messianic woes (cf. 6:12), and though there is no explicit statement that there will be an increase in evil, such is implied by the nature of the events described.

7:27 is simply a bare reference to the evils which have been foretold. The fact that the Messiah is said to be revealed immediately thereafter (7:28) suggests that the evil referred to is to be understood as a reference to the messianic woes.

9:1-12 again consists of signs preceding the end which probably are messianic woes, but even if such is the case, the increase in evil is implied rather than explicit.

12:13, 23-24 refer to the "more terrifying kingdom" and the kings who rule the earth "more oppressively", undoubtedly referring to Rome and its rulers. This is not a reference to general physical evil, however, though it would tend to have that effect in view of the world-wide power of Rome.

13:19 is a statement about the perils of the last days which again only implies that such perils would be worse than that which had preceded.

13:30-38 in describing the behavior of the innumerable multitude as it prepares to do battle with the man from the sea, uses terminology which sounds very much as though the author is referring to the messianic woes, and in any case, the context indicates a limited end-time application.

All the above passages seem to refer exclusively to the time of the end, and though only 5:1-12 and 12:13, 23-24 explicitly indicate an increase in evil,

such an increase is at least implied in the other passages. But now the passages must be taken up which may have a wider scope, and indicate a pattern of increasing physical evil during the time preceding the era of the messianic woes.

The first passage of significance is 4:26-32, which implies that evil had been "growing" ever since the time when the evil seed was first sown in Adam's heart. But since this passage involves both moral evil and physical evil, it will be discussed in further detail in the section dealing specifically with moral evil. The other two passages with specific implications for physical evil are 5:51-55, which speaks of a decrease in stature and physical vitality in those who are born from Mother Earth as the age draws to a close, and 14:10 (cf. 14:17), which states much the same thing more briefly and may be included in the discussion here. Although both statements occur in a specific discussion of the end-time, it is possible that the author might have held a view similar to that of Philo who considered each man descended from Adam to be inferior to him as the copy is inferior to the original (Op. 140-141). But in any case, since both statements in IV Ezra are so closely linked with a discussion of the end-time, it would appear that the author does not really intend to stress the fact that the world has been deteriorating ever since it was created. It is sufficient for him to state that it is now rapidly deteriorating as the end approaches. In this respect, however, these passages do represent a longer period of decline than do those statements which speak only of the evils connected with the birth-pangs of the Messiah, for this weakening of vitality is something that is taking place in the author's own time, whereas the messianic woes are still future.

b. Increase in Moral Evil

Those passages listed in the preceding section which are dealing with the messianic woes may be excluded from further discussion here, except to note in passing that the verses which speak most explicitly of an increase in evil during the time of the messianic woes (5:2-10) are speaking specifically of moral evil. But there are additional passages dealing with moral evil which perhaps imply that evil has been growing steadily worse in the world ever since Adam first sinned.

The problem of the "increase in moral evil" and the additional question of whether or not the author intends this concept to be a part of his argument appears most acutely in episode I. The two key passages, namely, 3:12 in the larger context of the whole chapter, and 4:26-32, have both been dealt with previously in connection with matters closely related to the problem presently under discussion, but the material needs to be assembled here in a more coherent matter so as to bring this particular issue sharply into focus.

i. The Interpretation of 3:12 in its Larger Context of the Whole Chapter.

In 3:12, Ezra states that the post-diluvians were even "more ungodly" than their ancestors had been. This is the only place in the chapter where it is explicitly said that evil increased. In the chapter as a whole, Ezra traces the history of God's dealings with mankind from the creation of Adam down to the destruction of Zion by Babylon. Alternately, Ezra notes the outbreaks of sin and God's intervening acts of salvation. It was suggested earlier that this particular method of tracing God's acts for his people is similar to that employed by Pss. 78, 106, and 107,²³ where there seems to be an emphasis

23. See discussion above in chapter IV, A, 2, a.

on the fact that God is willing to save his people in spite of their rebellion. In IV Ezra, the author seems to be inferring that in this last rebellion, God should be willing to save in spite of Israel's sins, just as he had been willing to do ever since the first man sinned. Both 3:21 and 3:26 imply that Adam's descendants sinned just as he did, with no hint that later generations were in fact more wicked. This emphasis on the sameness of Adam and his posterity is stressed from another angle in 3:10 where Ezra states that the wicked inhabitants of the world received the same fate as Adam: death. Furthermore, if the author had really intended to make the fact of increasing sinfulness an integral part of his argument, he would be expected to emphasize this aspect before he shifts his attention to the comparison of Israel and Babylon in 3:28-34. But instead, he chooses to claim simply that the last guilty generation sinned just like the first and every succeeding generation, for all had the same evil heart (3:26). The Syriac and Georgian stress the "sameness" even more by producing a text which states that the last generation did "nothing new" beyond that which Adam and all his descendants had done.²⁴ If the author were simply admitting Israel's guilt and appealing for God's mercy on that basis, as is done in some of the lament psalms,²⁵ then it might serve his purpose well to argue that each succeeding generation is more guilty and therefore more deserving of mercy. But the author is not

24. The Syriac reads *ܢܗܝܠ ܢܘܘܝܘܫ ܕܥܕܢܐ*. The Georgian has "nihil novius fecerunt".

25. This appears to be more a feature of the individual laments than of the communal laments, but the prayer of Daniel 9:4-19 is a good example of "admitted" guilt forming the basis for an appeal on behalf of the community; see esp. Dan. 9:5-16, 18.

merely a penitent suppliant seeking mercy; he is more the inveterate complainer or unrepentant accuser, and especially is this so in chapter 3. His complaint would appear to be driven home more effectively if he is seen to claim that the last sinners were left without help, even though they were no worse than any of the others. There is one subtlety to Ezra's argument of chapter 3, however, which could very easily be overlooked (and may indeed have been overlooked by the author himself!), for when Ezra refers to God's saving acts in his review of God's dealing with man, it is in fact the one or the very few who are saved: Noah and his household (3:11), Abraham (3:13), Isaac (3:15), Jacob (3:16), and David (3:23). Those who were punished are the great multitude: all Adam's descendants (3:7), the post-diluvian nations (3:12), Israel after Sinai (3:20-22), and the inhabitants of David's city (3:25-27). If this "salvation review" had been intended for use in the many/few argument of episode III, it would have provided either an excellent additional cause for complaint by Ezra because of the fewness of the saved, or ideal rebuttal material for Uriel who could verify from God's past dealings that God is indeed interested only in the few. But as noted in the discussion of the one/many and many/few arguments, chapter 3 is predominantly concerned with the one, Israel, so Ezra can overlook, for the moment, the fact that God seldom has saved the many, the only possible exception being the multitude that was saved at the Exodus (3:16ff).²⁶ Ezra has actually

26. This aspect illustrates the considerable gulf between Ezra's one/many argument and his many/few argument. To argue that God ought to save the many as Ezra has done in episode III, is really to tacitly reject much of the election dogma.

taken this interest in the one, and developed it into a vigorous complaint against God's lack of assistance to Israel now. It would appear to be justified, then, to say that the author does not intend to stress the concept of an ever-increasing wickedness which has been multiplying since the time of Adam, at least this would seem to be the situation in chapter 3.

ii. The Problem in 4:26-32. In dealing with the argument in 4:26-32, one must first recognize that this is a statement from Uriel in a pre-consolation episode. Accordingly, whatever the passage teaches about the increase of evil is not so likely to be integral to the development of the author's complaint, especially since Ezra turns the conversation in a different direction thereafter. Nevertheless, the possibility must be seriously considered that the author is speaking here of a crescendo of evil which has been building since primeval times. In the first place, an element of growth is implied by the use of the metaphor "seed/harvest", but the specific use of this imagery must be scrutinized more closely before conclusions can be drawn.

Against a background of pessimistic statements about the present age (4:26-27), Uriel states in 4:28 that the evil has been sown, but the harvest has not yet come. This same line of thought is continued with a slightly different emphasis in 4:30-32 where Uriel asks Ezra to consider how much ungodliness the one grain has produced and will continue to produce until the time of threshing. But here the textual problem should be noted. As discussed earlier, the retention of the adjective "good" as a qualifier of "seed" seems preferable, thus following the Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Ar-1 against the Latin and Ar-2. Yet even if the adjective is omitted,

no light would be shed on how the author would understand the increase in evil since the beginning of time, because 4:32 would simply then refer to a great increase in evil which must occur in the time just before the end-- a time which in this context, is still clearly ahead of the author's own era. If, on the other hand, the adjective "good" is retained as the context seems to require, the resultant reading only marginally affects the problem under discussion since 4:31-32 would then simply suggest that as far as the author's own time is concerned, the fruit of the evil seed had already attained considerable maturity. In other words, it is a matter of contrast, not process. There still remains, however, the concept of growth which seems to be implied in 4:28 and 30. But there is evidence to suggest that the growth idea is not dominant in the author's argument at this point. This evidence may be discussed under two general aspects: first, the comparison of the good and bad seed (assuming the Syr., Eth., Georgian, and Ar-1 to be correct);²⁷ and second, the relative importance of the time of the end in the passage itself and in the larger context in which the passage occurs.

(a) Comparison of the Good and Bad Seed. When the author introduces the concept of the good seed in 4:29 and 32, it must be asked whether the idea of growth is a relevant one. Does he intend to suggest that there will be a gradual increase in the bliss of the righteous as the seed matures? That hardly seems likely. As far as the good seed is concerned, the author probably would move quickly from sowing to harvest, with no emphasis on the

27. The contrast between the good and evil is not entirely dependent on reading "good" in 4:32, since "good" is already mentioned in 4:29.

growth aspect. And in fact, this is what he has done in 4:32: the seeds are sown and then comes the harvest. If that is so with the reference to the good seed, the same could be true of the evil seed, though that would seem less likely on the face of it, given the author's more elaborate discussion of the evil seed. If, however, the adjective "good" is retained in 4:32, then there is no explicit reference in 4:26-32 to the growth of evil as an increasing process, for the statements in 4:30-31 need imply nothing more than continuous process, if process is involved at all. That would leave only 4:28 which exhibits precisely the same interval of seed-harvest with no emphasis on growth, as is evident in connection with the good seed.

An intriguing question, which, if it could be answered, would shed considerable light on the problem, is: which of the several figures entailed in the author's metaphor is his starting point? There would appear to be two figures which stand out from the others: the evil seed, and the threshing floor (Latin: area; Syr. ܐܪܥܐ). The evil seed, which is most likely the near-equivalent of the rabbinic evil yetzer, has already been mentioned by the author in a slightly different dress as the evil heart (3: 20, 26) and the evil root (3:22).²⁸ If in this context, the author intends to stress the evils of the present age more than the blessings of the age to come, then the evil seed would figure more prominently. If, on the other hand, he intends to direct the attention more towards the blessings of the age to come, then the threshing floor would figure more prominently. In terms of mere

28. See full discussion of evil yetzer terminology in chapter VI, A, 4, a.

quantity of words, the evil is emphasized more than the good in 4:26-32, but significantly, the context which follows picks up the theme of the threshing floor and builds on a slender thread of optimism. Ezra's first question in 4:33 seems to imply that he wants the consummation to come, and thereafter Uriel mentions again the threshing floor of the righteous (4:35), while Ezra is concerned that the sins of the earth's inhabitants has delayed the threshing floor which is due the righteous (4:39). All this suggests that, according to his usual form, Uriel is here more interested in the reward of the righteous than he is in the evils of the present age, though he does not hesitate to describe the evils of this world as a means of placing the joys of the age to come in a more favorable light. Although the evil seed may have been Uriel's starting point, in the end he appears to be less interested in the evil seed than in the good, using the former as a means of throwing the latter into bold relief. Thus, any idea of the growth of evil throughout the whole of the present evil age would be incidental to the simple but sharp contrast which Uriel seeks to establish between the two ages.

(b) The Dominance of the End-time in 4:26-32. If the idea of ever-increasing evil through the history of the world were to be firmly established from 4:26-32, it would have to be shown that the author has shown here a sufficient interest in the full course of world history (as distinguished from a mere interest in end-time events) to warrant the application of a growth concept. But such an interest in the whole of human history is hardly dominant in this particular passage: 4:26-27 is concerned with the evils of this age, but primarily in its end-oriented aspects; 4:28 and 29 both contrast the sowing with the harvest and thus focus on the transition between

the ages; 4:31-32, either with or without the adjective "good", is dealing with the end-time. Only in 4:30 is there a definite panorama of past, present, and future: For a grain of evil seed was sown in Adam's heart from the beginning, and how much ungodliness it has produced until now, and will produce until the time of threshing comes. But as noted above, this need imply only a continuous presence of evil, rather than an increasing level of evil. The idea that Adam's sin introduced a more or less fixed level of "evil" at a given point in time is substantiated by Uriel's later pronouncement in 7:11 where he states that, when Adam sinned, what was made was judged. This later context gives no hint whatsoever that the evil results of Adam's sin were to increase as time passed. It would appear, then, that the statement in 4:30 need not detract from the end-oriented nature of the section as a whole, and as indicated above, this concern with the consummation continues in the dialogue that follows. Thus, 4:26-32 shows very little interest in the whole of world history, and if the idea of increasing evil is present at all, it would only be incidental to Uriel's main intention here of contrasting the evils of this present age with the joys of the age to come.

iii. The Problem in 7:48, 64, 71; 14:16-18. The remaining statements in IV Ezra which have a bearing on the question of increasing moral evil really contribute very little to the discussion. In episode III, there are three statements which are interesting in themselves, but do not directly contribute to a solution of the problem at hand. In 7:48, Ezra speaks of the evil heart which has grown up in us.²⁹ While the end result of the evil heart is death,

29. Latin and Ethiopic speak of growth. Syriac has simply "an evil heart is in us". The Georgian has: "Positum enim est apud nos cor malum", to which Blake footnotes "inter" as the literal translation instead of "apud".

the growth of the evil heart in man does not seem to be correlated with an increased wickedness on the earth. It has simply confirmed the hopelessness of man's situation. In 7:64, Ezra speaks of the mind which "grows with us", a phrase which is repeated by Uriel in 7:71.³⁰ Here the growth aspect seems to refer to an increase in mental anguish as the awareness of man's destiny presses upon him. Again, while this growth compounds man's misery from Ezra's point of view, or his guilt, from Uriel's point of view, it does not contribute to an increase of evil on the earth.

The final passage which deals with the question of increased moral evil is 14:16-18. Since this passage is dealing predominantly with the end-time, it could have been listed with the other contexts which speak of an increase in evil at the end of time. But since it appears to be dealing rather exclusively with moral evil, rather than with moral and physical evil together, and since it includes a hint of a general decline in the morality of the world which may antedate the time of the messianic woes and the end-related events, it has been reserved for special mention here. In some respects, this passage is similar to 5:51-55, and 14:10 which speak of a decline in the physical vitality of the world as it grows old. In 14:15-17, however, the decline in physical vitality seems to be linked with an increase in moral evil (14:17): God has instructed Ezra to lay aside his interest in earthly things (14:13-15), for worse evils will be done in the hereafter (14:16). After linking the earth's increasing age with increasing evil (14:17), God

30. See further on this passage in chapter VI, A, 4, a.

tells Ezra that truth will go farther away and falsehood will come nearer (14:18). All this points to an increase in moral evil at the end-time. But on the same principle which admits that everything about man's physical nature has gradually declined since Adam,³¹ an argument could be made for envisaging man's moral nature in the same way. This seems less likely, however, when one notes that the statements in IV Ezra which could be so interpreted (5:51-55; 14:10, 17) are not all linked with Adam, but are speaking specifically of the end of the world. Thus while the author clearly admits that evil will increase as the world approaches an end, this passage cannot be taken as conclusive support for an idea of ever-increasing wickedness on the earth from the time of the first sin onwards. It should also be noted that this statement in chapter 14 is from the divine side of the dialogue, and what is more, it is in a post-consolation episode, so it plays no part in the development of Ezra's complaint.

c. Summary: Is Evil Increasing on the Earth?

A summary may now be attempted with reference to the question of whether or not evil is increasing on the earth. As noted previously, the distinction between qualitative and quantitative increase may virtually be ignored since an increase in one aspect seems invariably to imply an increase in the other, at least insofar as the problem of evil is concerned.

Regarding physical evil, the author of IV Ezra definitely indicates that

31. Cf. Philo, Op. 140-141.

there will be a great increase as the end approaches. This is in addition to the once-for-all disaster which came upon the earth as a result of Adam's sin. There are also statements which could be taken to mean that as the earth has grown old, her vitality has diminished, but whether the author would extend this principle to include all of human history since the sin of Adam remains doubtful.

As far as moral evil is concerned, the author again admits a considerable increase in moral strife at the end-time. On one occasion (14:17), he also indicates that the weakened vitality of the earth in her old age will lead directly to an increase in moral evil in the last days, but as is the case with physical evil, it is unclear whether or not this principle of decreased vitality and increased immorality would apply to the whole of human history. But the major problem area with reference to the possible increase in moral evil, is the interpretation of two contexts in episode I. It is in 3:12 that the author produces the only unambiguous statement in his book about an increase in moral evil which cannot be construed as applying either to the time of the end or to the immediate effects of Adam's sin. Here, Ezra refers to the increase in wickedness which followed the time of the flood, but the impact of this statement is weakened by other statements from Ezra which affirm the sameness of Adam's descendants with reference to moral evil (3:21, 26; cf. 3:10). The other reference in I is 4:26-32, from the mouth of Uriel. Though the metaphor of seed/harvest suggests the idea of an increase in evil, Uriel's real purpose appears to be to contrast the evils of the present age with the glories of the age to come, so that any hint of an increase in evil is strictly peripheral. Furthermore, since the statement is from Uriel, it

is not integral to the development of Ezra's complaint. Yet in spite of the fact that these passages do not firmly establish the idea of an ever-increasing plague of wickedness on the earth, there is no question of Ezra taking an optimistic view of the present age. In this respect, Ezra and Uriel agree, for both are convinced that the present age holds no hope, and since the end-time is pictured as imminent, Ezra admits that things can only get worse. In addition, man's capacity for reason compounds his agony as the end approaches. But as far as the whole of human history is concerned, the author does not seem to be intent on depicting a "snowball" effect of ever-increasing evil. For him, it is sufficient to admit that things have been bad enough right from the very first. Not only is this sentiment evident in Ezra's part of the dialogue (cf. 3:7, 10, 20-22, 26), but the same is true of the statements by Uriel: "For a grain of evil seed was sown in Adam's heart from the beginning..." (4:30; cf. 7:11).

B. Summary: Definition of the Theodicy-problem in IV Ezra

The definition of Ezra's problem tends to vary, depending on whether the primary subject is Israel or all mankind, but in either case, there is an undercurrent of discontent about the appropriateness or availability of God's blessings to man. Ezra recognizes God's past blessings, but his appreciation of them is restricted because of God's unwillingness to control evil. The blessings of the future are virtually unattainable because of man's inability to attain the necessary level of morality which would qualify him for the age to come. As far as present blessings are concerned, Ezra says very little, since his whole complaint is triggered by the present distress. In order to

more clearly delineate the nature of Ezra's complaint, the present chapter has dealt with three closely related comparisons or contrasts which grow out of the two-pronged approach of the book, and in each case an attempt has been made to determine which half of each pairing represents the author's real concern, and therefore his purpose in writing: is he more concerned with present distress or future judgment? Is he more concerned about Israel or about all mankind? Is he more concerned about physical evil or moral evil? As has been noted, a concern for present distress, Israel, and physical evil, predominates in those episodes which focus on the one/many argument, namely I, II, and to a lesser extent IV-VII. Likewise, a concern for future judgment, all mankind, and moral evil, predominates where the many/few argument is foremost, and that is primarily in III. In the comparison of each individual aspect, as well as in the book as a whole, and one/many argument serves as the catalyst for Ezra's laments, but this interest in Israel gives way to Ezra's concern for all mankind, a concern which he enunciates with cogency and passion in episode III. So while the author has safeguarded his ties to Judaism by demonstrating considerable interest in his own people, his real agony seems to stem from his fear of that future judgment which all men must face—a judgment which engenders despair in the heart of man because he is so sadly lacking in moral qualities. The impression that this is the author's real interest, is heightened by the way in which episode III stands as an unanswered challenge, even after Ezra has safely returned to the one/many fold. Additional support for this position can also be taken from the way in which elements from the many/few argument have crept into the episodes dominated by the one/many argument. Using the comparisons on which

this chapter is based, this situation may be summarized as follows:

1. Present distress/future judgment. After the dominant interest in the judgment is established in III, the author maintains this interest in the consolation episodes, focusing particularly on the judgment in his final remarks to the people (14:35). On the other hand, Israel's present physical distress receives no mention whatsoever in the many/few segment of III (7:17-9:25). 2. Israel/all mankind. The author has used universalistic arguments throughout I-IV, including specific references to creation when dealing with Israel. Conversely, in the many/few portion of III (7:17-9:25), Ezra rarely refers to Israel at all, but when he does he tends to use universalistic arguments (e.g., creation in 8:24, 45), or refers to the forensic aspects of the final judgment (8:18, 32, 36). 3. Physical evil/moral evil. While episode I ostensibly is concerned with Zion's physical distress (3:1-2), the whole of Ezra's initial prayer is permeated with a concern about moral evil. Uriel's reply in 4:4 also emphasizes this interest in moral evil. Similarly, in episode VII, when giving his final admonition to the people, Ezra does not promise relief from physical distress, but right-standing in the judgment, counseling the people to maintain right moral behavior in the meantime (14:34-35). Furthermore, in episode III, where the many/few argument predominates, the interest in moral evil has virtually eclipsed any mention of physical evil.

It should be evident, then, that not only has the author's argument reached a high-point in III, but that which dominates the attention there, has left its mark on the balance of the book, pointing rather conclusively to the problem of moral evil in man--man's inability to live a righteous life.

as the real source of the author's agony, and therefore, the true motivating force of his book. The question that must now be taken up is: if the author's problem is the problem of moral evil in man, what is his solution? If he has questioned the justice and integrity of God's dealings with man, what is his theodicy? The following chapter will take up this question, dealing first with the elements of a rational solution, and second, with the elements of an experiential solution.

CHAPTER VI

THEODICY IN IV EZRA: RATIONAL, OR EXPERIENTIAL SOLUTION?

If the author of IV Ezra has attempted to present a problem in the first half of his book, and provide a solution in the latter half, then one would be justified in expecting a recognizable correlation of content between the two portions. But this is one of the puzzling aspects of the Ezra Apocalypse, and one that has contributed to the desire on the part of earlier scholars to dissect the book rather than treat it as a unity, for the problems raised in the early episodes are either ignored or treated quite indirectly in the later episodes.¹ Consequently, one cannot really speak of the second half of the book as being the logical reply to the first half. It may very well be a reply, but not a logical reply. In view of the transition from pessimism

1. Note how Oesterley has still separated episodes V-VII into separate sources even after he had concluded that Kabisch and Box had erroneously fragmented chapters 3-10. Even the earlier description of the two parts of the book by Volkmar as "Theodizee" and "Zukunfts-Offenbarung" emphasizes the disparity which exists between them.

to optimism, one would perhaps be justified in saying that if the author has failed to arrive at a rational theodicy, he has nevertheless somehow been able to construct an "experiential theodicy" which permits him to set aside his anxieties in the end. Yet there are numerous hints of the elements of a rational theodicy--partial answers which the author was either not able or not willing to develop into a full-fledged system. These potential elements of a rational theodicy are interwoven with the author's complaints in the early episodes. The development and use of these "solutions" to the problem of evil in the Jewish sources up to and including the time of IV Ezra has been noted in chapter I. The present chapter will attempt, first of all, to explore the use of these rational "solutions" in IV Ezra, and then, in conclusion, will evaluate the experiential aspect of theodicy in IV Ezra. In the discussion of the elements of a rational theodicy which forms the first and greater part of the present chapter, the four solutions which the author had available to him will be dealt with in the same order as in the preliminary survey, with the determining factor being whether the responsibility for evil is placed on the individual, Adam, Satan, or God. In the summary of each section, a brief statement will be included comparing the position of IV Ezra and that of II Baruch.

A. Theodicy in IV Ezra: The Rational Solution

1. Personal Responsibility for Sin (Evil)

The teaching of the personal responsibility for sin can hardly be called a "theodicy" in the proper sense of the term, for it does not attempt to delve so deeply into the roots of evil as the other three "solutions" do.

Nevertheless, it can play an important part in the attempts to arrive at a viable theodicy, because it claims that regardless of the origins and cause of evil, God has endowed man with a sufficient element of free choice to determine his own destiny. Thus the rabbinic position was, that, regardless of the sin of Adam, the influence of Satan, or the power of the evil yetzer, each man is still responsible for his own destiny.² With this in mind, the views of the author of IV Ezra relating to personal responsibility may now be considered.

It can be stated at the outset that the author presents a strong case for individual responsibility for sin, but the most vigorous statements to this effect are placed in the mouth of Uriel. This raises the question as to just where the author would stand in relationship to a teaching which places the responsibility for a man's destiny squarely on his own shoulders. Harnisch's approach suggests that the author is polemicizing against a skeptical point of view which holds that man is doomed, having no control over his destiny. If, however, as suggested here, the author's deepest convictions come from the mouth of Ezra, then such a diminution of personal responsibility would be quite an unacceptable interpretation of the Ezra speeches, assuming the author wished to remain faithful to his Jewish faith. In order to substantiate the position taken here, careful attention must be given to the concept of personal responsibility for sin, especially with reference to the Ezra speeches which occur in the pre-consolation episodes.

a. Freedom vs. Determinism

2. Cf. note in Schechter, op. cit., p. 188.

By way of introduction, a few words are necessary to indicate the general attitude of Uriel and of Ezra to God's method of government and man's relationship to divine plans. Both Ezra and Uriel are fully confident of God's power over the world. If Ezra complains, it is not because he considers God to be impotent, but because God is apparently unwilling to do what Ezra deems necessary in order to keep God's reputation untarnished. From Ezra's point of view, God is perfectly able to create the world (3:4ff; 6:38ff), to preserve the notable saint (3:11, 13, 15-16, 23), to elect and preserve Israel (3:16ff; 5:23ff), and to sustain the individual man (8:7-12); but God is also the one who appointed death for Adam (3:7), brought the flood (3:9), and handed Zion over to God's own enemies (3:27; 5:28). So Ezra has no worries about God's power; he just cannot fathom why God does not use his power to hinder evil doers (3:8), to take away the evil heart so that the law can bear fruit (3:20), to restore his people and thereby rescue his own reputation (4:25), and to punish his people himself rather than handing them over to his enemies (5:30). Furthermore, how can God endure such blatant sinners while his own people are suffering at their hands (3:28-33; cf. 5:29)? Although Ezra is convinced of God's omnipotence, he only once explicitly affirms the adequacy of God's rule in the world, and that is in 13:57-58, which, of course, is well into the consolation episodes. Uriel, on the other hand, frequently asserts that God is effectively ruling the world according to a predetermined plan, the most jarring statement to that effect being in 7:74 where he links God's long-suffering with God's determination of the times, while specifically excluding any connection with sympathy for man (cf. also 4:36-37; 5:42, 44; 7:44).

Before the more specific aspects of individual responsibility are taken

up, it should be noted that Uriel, while putting more emphasis than Ezra does on the predetermined nature of God's dealings with man, also places more stress on man's responsibility to determine his own destiny. Ezra, on the other hand, as implied by the references cited in the previous paragraph, seems more concerned with God's special intervention into the affairs of man, whether with reference to salvation or destruction. Accordingly, God's government appears both more erratic and more pliable from Ezra's point of view. Not only are there cases where God's inaction seems incomprehensible, but there are occasions when Ezra thinks that man should be able to interfere, so to speak, with God's plans. This appears in a negative sense in 4:39 where he fears that sin can delay the reward of the righteous, and in a more positive light when he wishes that the righteous could intercede on behalf of the ungodly (7:102ff). This difference in emphasis between Ezra and Uriel suggests that Uriel is the one who is really supporting a government of law according to justice, and more actively so than is Ezra. The paradox of the first three episodes is that it is Ezra who appears to be calling God's justice into question while at the same time asking God to lay aside the "rules of justice" and be merciful. The implications of this contrast will be developed more fully below.

b. Ezra's View of Man's Situation: All Have Sinned, but Not All Will Perish

i. The Universality of Sin. There are several statements in IV Ezra which explicitly state that all men have sinned: 3:21, 26, 35; 4:38; 7:46, 68; 8:35. The two most notable facts connected with these statements are that they are all from Ezra and that they are all in the first three episodes.

In addition to these explicit statements, there are several other statements which come very close to admitting the same thing: 7:137 states that apart from God's mercies, no one could have life; 8:17 and 9:33 simply affirm the sins and failures of Israel.³ These last three references are also from Ezra, with the last one (9:33) occurring in the early part of episode IV. It is a curious fact that Uriel nowhere claims that all have sinned, and furthermore, that Ezra makes such statements only in the pre-consolation episodes. By no stretch of the imagination could the simple statement that all have sinned be considered deviant theology, yet it is restricted to the lamentation episodes and is closely connected with Ezra's complaints against God. It must be noted, however, that while Ezra claims that all men have sinned, it does not follow that he considers all men to be destined to perish. But this must be taken up in greater detail because of the contention of Brandenburger and Harnisch that Ezra represents a fatalistic point of view which considers all men to be doomed.⁴

ii. Many, but Not All Will Perish. The discussion here centers on two problem passages in episode III (7:47-48, 138-140) and one in IV (10:10). But before these are taken up in some detail, the other relevant passages should be noted as a means of placing the problem in focus. First of all, it may be said that Uriel never questions the fact that there are some who will

3. Also of interest here is 7:117 which RSV renders as "For what good is it to all that they live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death?" This reflects the Latin text, but see below, note 68.

4. See also chapter III, note 11.

be saved. Not only is this true of episode III in the context of the many/few argument already discussed at length (7:51, 59-61; 8:1-3, 51-55; 9:22; cf. also 8:37-40), but it applies also to the first two episodes (4:26ff, 34ff; 6:8-10, 25-28). Furthermore, in the last three episodes, both Ezra and the angel accept the fact that some will be saved (cf. 12:34; 13:12, 48-49; 14:34-35). So the problem narrows down to the views expressed by Ezra in the first four episodes. Now aside from the problem passages noted above, the relevant statements from Ezra can be classed in three groups: first, there are simple statements which infer that a few are sufficiently righteous to merit salvation. In this category 3:36 and 9:14-16 are to be placed. Second, there are statements which seem to imply that some will be saved, but since they are in the nature of an appeal by Ezra, the statement is not an unqualified one. Here may be placed 7:137 which states that if it were not for God's mercies, no one would have life. This is in the midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 which will be discussed in some detail below. Also in the second group is 8:26-30 in which Ezra appeals to God to take note of the righteous, rather than the wicked. Third, there are five passages, all in episode III, which speak of those who have lived aright and thus deserve to inherit the age to come: 7:18, 45, 122, 125; 8:33. The remarkable thing about each of these passages is the way in which each is immediately followed by a reference to the perishing. The result in each case is a "Yes, but..." statement which considerably weakens the impact of the statement about those who will be saved.

The above citations, while not making a case for a seer who is brimming with confidence about the future, do not justify the claim that Ezra

considers man to be doomed. Yet when these statements are linked with the passages noted in an earlier chapter in which Ezra classes himself with the sinners and perishing (e.g., 4:12; 7:62-69, 118-126; 8:31; 9:36),⁵ the picture does look rather bleak. Accordingly, the three problem passages are pivotal and must be discussed in some detail.

(a) The Key Passages

(1) 7:47-48. There are three significant aspects to this passage: first, the contrast in 7:47 between the few who will be saved and the many who will be lost; second, the evil heart as the destructive element in man; and third, the destruction of "almost all" or "all" who have been created. With regard to the first aspect, all the versions express the contrast between the few and the many. But with reference to the second aspect, namely, the evil heart, there is some variation among the more paraphrastic versions. The Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Georgian all present the idea that it is the evil heart within man that leads him astray. Ar-1, however, personalizes the evil heart as the "evil one". Ar-2 and Arm. both eliminate the evil heart and place the blame directly on man, e.g., "We have gone astray...". It will be noted in the discussion of the evil heart below, that the author of IV Ezra does not teach the complete rabbinic doctrine of the evil yetzer for he emphasizes primarily the negative effect of the evil heart to the neglect of its potential for good. Nevertheless, simple possession of the evil

5. See further, chapter III, B, 1, b.

heart, even in IV Ezra, need not automatically spell destruction.⁶ When one turns, then, to the third aspect noted above, on logical grounds, it would seem preferable to speak of the destruction of "almost all" in 7:47-48, rather than the destruction of "all". This seems to be required by 7:47 which states that a few will be saved. When the versions deal with the passage, however, they differ considerably. The clearest witness in favor of "almost all" is indicated by the "paena" of the Latin. The Syriac can also be interpreted to favor this reading, though the text is not entirely straightforward.⁷ The remaining versions, however, seem to favor the reading of "all", albeit by a variety of means.⁸ Violet II actually chooses to translate

6. Cf. 7:92 and 8:53 which are statements from Uriel to the effect that the evil heart (literally: "evil thought" [7:92]; "root of evil" [8:53]) can be overcome. It may be significant that the more optimistic statements about the evil heart are from the divine side of the dialogue.

7. The Syriac text actually reads ܐܝܬܐ which does not seem to match up well in this context with any of the normal lexical meanings (companion, neighbor; another, the other; equal to, like; see A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, ed. J. Payne Smith, Oxford, 1903, p. 125). Violet I (p. 154), follows Ceriani's original suggestion of ܐܝܬܐ and renders it as "vielleicht". Bensly (MF, p. 58) notes that Ceriani later preferred to retain the original reading of ܐܝܬܐ, rendering it as "simul" or "conjunctim", though he recognized the difficulties of this rendering. According to Bensly, the Latin "paene" ("pene") would seem to favor ܐܝܬܐ except for the following ܐܝܬܐ, so he suggests a reconsideration of the ܐܝܬܐ of the MS. The details of Bensly's suggestion can be found in MF, pp. 58-59, but in essence, he thinks that the Syriac of Eccclus. 30:4 hints at the usage of the term as a particle meaning "well nigh", "as if", or "one might almost say". He suggests that the germ of this usage might be traced to the use of ܐܝܬܐ in Prov. 28:24. Yet Bensly concludes that "in the absence of other examples, the existence of such a particle must still be considered doubtful...." (MF, p. 59). Nevertheless, his suggestion remains as a possible explication of the text. Gressmann (in Violet II, p. 340) returns to Ceriani's original suggestion of ܐܝܬܐ and simply deletes the following ܐܝܬܐ as a dittograph of the preceding ܐܝܬܐ. Either the Bensly or the Ceriani-Gressmann suggestion would bring the Syriac tolerably close to the Latin "paene".

8. The Ethiopic has: "Not with regard to a few, but with regard to all"; the Ar-1 has: "And not these alone, but even more than these"; the Ar-2 has:

the expression as "allesant", relying on the "omnes omnino" of the Armenian which he thinks belongs at the end of 7:48 instead of at the first where it stands in the extant Armenian text. He also draws support for his reading from the Ethiopic on the basis of a reconstruction of the Greek Vorlage.⁹ The great variety exhibited by the versions suggests that each in its own way sought to modify the text, probably for theological reasons. The most likely motive would appear to be the desire to bring the doctrine of IV Ezra into line with an interpretation of Pauline doctrine which views every man as corrupt as a result of Adam's sin. Since the Latin certainly witnesses to "almost all" and the Syriac probably does, while only the freer versions point towards a reading of "all", the "almost all" seems preferable, especially since 7:47 in all the versions states that there are at least some who will not go to perdition.

(2) 7:132-140. This passage from the mouth of Ezra is speaking predominantly about God, rather than about man, but there are aspects which touch on man's activity and thus shed some light on the concept of individual

"Not we alone, but also the children with us"; the Armenian produces "All of us together". The Georgian is corrupt, according to Blake, but he gives the following Latin translation: "sed sic quoddam sic nos cunctos creavit". Underlining is Blake's italics.

9. Violet I renders the Ethiopic as "über alle", which he suggests represents a misreading of the Greek ἀπὸ πάντας as ἀπὸ πάντας. Violet I (p. 154) also suggests that ἀπὸ may lie behind the Latin "paene". Violet II (p. 80) thinks this same formula at least partially explains the Ar-1 and Ar-2 as well. Thus, according to Violet, only the Syriac remains inexplicable, for on the basis of advice from Noeldeke both the MS reading and Ceriani's emendation are held to be impossible (Violet II, p. 80). Violet offers a conjectural emendation of his own which modifies the text considerably.

responsibility. It has generally been accepted that this passage is a midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 and that it forms a commentary on seven attributes (middoth) of the divine character. The possible Greek and Hebrew antecedents of each attribute have been thoroughly discussed in earlier literature,¹⁰ and need not be repeated here, but what is of interest is the concept of man that lies behind this midrash and how this concept has been modified by the several versions. The seven attributes are all directly related in some way to God's activity towards man, but there are at least three different levels on which this relationship is established. First, in only one case is there an explicit conditioning of God's attitude by the act of man, and this is in 7:133 where God is said to be gracious to those who repent. Second, in three other cases, God is depicted as responding in some gracious or kindly way to man as sinner, without any mention of a prior act of repentance on the part of man; thus in 7:134 God is patient towards sinners, in 7:138 he gives of his goodness to relieve men of their iniquities, and in 7:139 he is the (just)¹¹ judge who pardons and blots out sin. Finally, in three instances,

10. For the Hebrew, see Simonsen (op. cit.); for Hebrew and Greek, see Violet II (pp. 102-105), Box (pp. 164-169), Gunkel (p. 378); for the Greek only, see Hilgenfeld (op. cit., p. 68), and Volkmar (pp. 101-104).

11. Commentators are virtually unanimous in suspecting the appearance of "judge" in this series, at least without some qualifying word or phrase. According to Violet I (p. 214), le Hir and then Gunkel proposed a misreading of דָּן from דָּן . This has also been accepted by Box (p. 168), Violet II (p. 105), and Oesterley (p. 97). The appropriate meaning for דָּן does not occur in the OT, but Jastrow, op. cit., p. 1594, gives the late Hebrew meanings in the Piel as "cause release from a debt" and "remit". Simonsen (op. cit., p. 276), however, suggests that a qualifying phrase or word has dropped out, and that the phrase should perhaps read דָּן וְיָסוּר . This seems the more likely solution, especially since it is hinted at in the Ar-1 version. In this connection, one could also refer to the "just judge" who appears at the end of the Ezra Apocalypse (14:32), and also the linking of

God is simply acting kindly towards man as man, regardless of his relationship to sin: in 7:132, God is merciful to those who have not yet come into the world, in 7:135 he is bountiful, and in 7:136-137 he is abundant in compassion, thus enabling the world and its inhabitants to have life. The last instance is the broadest in scope, for it indicates that God is absolutely necessary to human existence. This statement probably has nothing to do with man's ability or inability to obey, but is most likely simply an echo of the basic OT belief that all life is dependent on God.¹² The comments on three of the attributes, however, do give a glimpse into man's responsibility for determining his own destiny. The clearest evidence for this is in 7:133 where man is treated graciously as a result of his repentance. More suggestive, however, are the two passages which infer that some men are capable of pleasing God without God's gracious intervention on their behalf. The first instance is in 7:138 where it is stated that were it not for God's giving of his goodness, not one in ten thousand would be able to have life. This may, of course, simply be a dramatic way of stating that in reality, no one is able to obtain life without God's giving of his goodness. In fact, several of the versions do not leave such an interpretation to chance, but actually produce a text which states that

mercy and righteousness at the end of Ezra's prayer in chapter 8. There the Latin ϕ MSS and the Ar-2 state that God's righteousness will be established when he is merciful. Perhaps "judge" in 7:139 is not so far off after all! See further, 1, c, ii, (b), below.

12. This is the sense of Myers' translation (p. 218): "The world together with those who live in it could not continue". He cites (p. 242) Ps. 119:77 as a parallel reference. Box (p. 167), however, thinks the reference is to eternal life.

no one can obtain life except for God's goodness. This is the course followed by the Ethiopic, Ar-1, and Armenian, and somewhat more cautiously by the Georgian.¹³ Thus only the Latin and Syriac preserve a text which says "not one in ten thousand" would have life. If this is the original reading, as appears likely, then there is at least the suggestion that if a sample larger than ten thousand were to be taken, one should be able to find the occasional saint who merits life apart from God's special intervention. This would be quite in keeping with Ezra's statement in 3:36 (cf. also 7:18, 48, 122, 125; 8:26-30, 33), and would accord with Ezra's contention that some, but only very few will actually be saved on the basis of merit. A somewhat analogous case is presented by the next passage, 7:139-140. Here it is stated that if God did not pardon and blot out sins, only a very few of the innumerable company would remain. This "very few" is attested by the Latin and Syriac, as before, but also by the Ethiopic, and perhaps by the Armenian.¹⁴ Ar-1 and Georgian make the destruction complete--not even the very few escape.¹⁵ So again, the two most reliable versions, plus the Ethiopic (and Armenian ?) support the idea of a remnant by merit, while the Ar-1 and Georgian reject it. Thus there is clear evidence in this midrash for the maintenance of a concept of individual responsibility. Not only is man apparently capable of repenting

13. The Ar-2 departs considerably from the other versions at this point: "And the sinners are able, not to be pious, yet to resemble them in some sense" ("und die Sünder vermögen nicht Fromme zu sein noch ihnen in irgend einer Sache zu gleichen.").

14. See note 22 below.

15. Arabic-2 has a lacuna here--perhaps intentional, though Ar-2 appears to have given just a summary of the whole midrash.

of his sins (7:133), but there are apparently some men who don't even need God's grace to be able to survive. This last concept is certainly supported by 7:139-140, and perhaps by 7:138 as well.

(3) 10:10. The situation in this verse is more perplexing because the Latin and Syriac produce a divergent text. The Latin states in 10:10c that "almost all" go to perdition, while the Syriac states that "all" go to perdition. Of the lesser versions, the Ethiopic and Ar-2 support the Syriac; The Ar-1 and Arm. are quite ambiguous and should probably not be taken to support either position, though the Ar-1 perhaps inclines to the Latin ("almost all"), and the Armenian to the Syriac ("all"). The Georgian is not extant for this passage. So the MSS evidence is thoroughly confused, and even a closer examination of the various versions yields no certain result.¹⁶ Only

16. One thing that a closer examination of the versions does reveal is a considerable freedom with the text. The Latin and Syriac (followed by RSV and NEB) distinguish four lines which is probably original. The Ethiopic unites C and D while preserving the thought of the Syriac that all will go to destruction. The Ar-1 reads as follows:

- A For from the very beginning, all these have been (upon her)
- B And also from her others will be born;
- C And behold, they are now going towards destruction,
- D Because most of them (live) in conceit.

While the Ar-1 has an "all" only in line A, the original apparently had an "all" in both lines A and C. The expression "most of them" in line D would tend to bring it more into harmony with the Latin, since it would be strange to send all to destruction when only most had lived in conceit. Violet II thinks that line D originally read "all of them" instead of "the multitude of them" (or "the most of them"), suggesting that the Hebrew כֻּלָּם was read as כֻּלָּן which yielded $\pi\lambda\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$ in the Greek. It seems more likely, however, that a theological tendency is at work in Ar-1 and this would seem to be reflected in lines A-C while the original intention of the author, unless Violet is correct, would be evident from line D. The Ar-2 eliminates both the "all" of line A and the "all" of line C, while giving the thought of the Syriac (i.e., all go to destruction); it adds an additional line at the beginning, reverses the position of B and C, and in general is very free in its treatment of the text. The Armenian joins lines A and B into one line, and lines C and D into another line, yielding the following text:

the Ar-1 can be construed so as to support the Latin text, and that rather tenuously. Nevertheless, there are other, broader considerations which suggest that the Latin text with its "paene" should be retained here: first, there are the passages already noted which do support the idea of a remnant by merit; second, there is the tendency of the versions to interpret, rather than just translate, thereby producing readings which are more explicit in indicating that all men stand in need of God's grace. Considerable material which relates to this second point has already been mentioned in the preceding text and notes above, but it would seem pertinent to illustrate more clearly this "interpretive tendency". Accordingly, the relevant material is brought together below.

(b) Remnant (by Merit): The Verdict of the Versions

The significance of the tendency of the versions to interpret some passages in the direction of a more pessimistic view of man's native abilities should be seen against the background of the Brandenburger-Harnisch hypothesis that the speeches of Ezra represent a gnosticizing heresy which considers sin

A-B For of so many born from her,

C-D The multitude returns to corruption.

The "all" is completely eliminated, and it would seem that the ambiguity of what remains makes it difficult to use the Armenian to support either the Latin or the Syriac with any degree of certainty, though the singular verb with "multitude" perhaps favors the Syriac. In any event, it does not seem unreasonable to conclude that the RSV and NEB are justified in retaining the "almost" in 10:10. The variations in the oriental versions could certainly be explained, as Hayman has suggested (op. cit., note 35) as attempts to harmonize the passage with Romans 3:9, 23.

to be a "Verhängnis" to which all men are doomed.¹⁷ But in order to explain both the transition from pessimism to guarded optimism, as well as the occasional passage which does not fit the basic hypothesis, Harnisch suggests that Ezra is seen to gradually capitulate to the angel's point of view.¹⁸ But this schema for interpreting the book can be brought into question on at least three grounds. First, there is no progressive capitulation on the part of Ezra; there is a transition to be sure, but virtually right up to that very point, Ezra tenaciously maintains his complaints against God.¹⁹ Second, it is untenable to take statements which claim the universality of sin and suggest that these indicate an inescapable "Verhängnis".²⁰ Third, the only passages which could legitimately be used to support the idea of a universal "Verhängnis" are found in the oriental versions, the reliability

17. Brandenburger, op. cit., p. 36; Harnisch, p. 60ff.

18. Harnisch, pp. 173, 229.

19. On page 173, Harnisch states that the initial prayer in episode IV represents Ezra's acceptance of the angel's point of view, a position which Ezra "more and more" has been making his own. But how does the bitter lament of 10:9-14 fit into this "progressive" harmonization? On p. 229, Harnisch refers to a "noteworthy self-correction" by Ezra in 7:45. This is seen as the result of the angel's teaching, but immediately thereupon, Ezra falls back into another bitter complaint (7:46-48). If Ezra has already been led by the angel into a self-correction at this early stage in episode III, then there is certainly plenty of acid in Ezra's system which will work itself out in the balance of the dialogue! Brandenburger and Harnisch have simply attempted to force the facts into their hypothesis without letting the course of the dialogue speak for itself. Ezra is no more heretical at the beginning than at the end; neither does he become progressively more repentant, docile, or agreeable as the point of transition approaches. When the transition comes, it comes suddenly, and prior to that point, Ezra's experience fluctuates so widely that any talk of progressive capitulation is quite unjustified.

20. See chapter III, note 11.

of which must seriously be questioned.²¹ It is in connection with this third aspect that the present section is most relevant. The summaries and discussion below will seek to demonstrate that because of the tendency of the oriental versions to eliminate the idea of a remnant by merit, or simply the idea of a remnant, and to use a variety of means to that end, the readings of the Latin MSS ought to be given high priority in the passages which deal with this particular aspect.

As a means of detecting the tendency of each version, five passages may be brought into consideration, which in the Latin imply a remnant by merit (3:36; 7:138, 139-140), or simply a remnant (7:48; 10:10). The significant aspect of each is described below, based on the Latin, following which, the readings in the other versions which vary from the Latin are detailed.

3:36 Individual men may perhaps be found who have kept the commandments.

7:48 The evil heart has removed not just a few from life, but almost all who have been created.

7:138 If the Most High did not give of his goodness, not one in ten thousand could have life.

7:139-140 If the Most High did not pardon those whom he created, only a very few would be left of the innumerable multitude.

10:10 Almost all go to perdition, and a multitude of them are destined for destruction.

21. Violet II depends on the oriental versions to eliminate the "paene" from 7:48 (p. 80), and from 10:10 (p. 136). One other passage which could be included here is 7:117, at least on the basis of the Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions which suggest that "all" expect punishment after death. Within the context of the lament, however, 7:122 and 125 indicate that some do live a pure life and will receive their reward. See further, A, 2, b, below, and especially note 68.

(1) Analysis of the Key Passages in the Versions

Syriac 7:48 Enigmatic. The ܬܝܕܝ of the MS possibly supports the Latin.

See the conjectures of Bensly and Ceriani-Gressmann in note 7 above.

10:10 Drops the "almost": "all her children go to perdition".

Ethiopic 3:36 Omits the key phrase. Volkmar suggests the omission was intentional for theological reasons; Violet I opts for a homoioteleuton.

7:48 Deletes the "almost". Violet I thinks that the "über alle" can be explained by postulating a Greek ὅρα which was read as ὁρά .

7:138 Eliminates the "not one in ten thousand" comparison: "the whole of mankind would not be left alive". Volkmar suggests that ἑστώ was read as ἕκαστος .

10:10 Follows the Syriac in deleting the "almost": "And they are all together brought into misery and destruction" (text is emended by Violet, but does not affect the point).

Arabic-1 3:36 Both phrases A and B are in question form: "Are there people to be found who keep your commandments or can another similar nation be found?" The effect is to make less likely the finding of individual men of merit. Volkmar suggests theological motives were at work.

7:48 The wicked heart is changed to the "evil one" and the "almost" is eliminated, but a comparison of sorts is retained between the many and the few: "And not these only, but what is more than these".

7:138 Eliminates the "not one in ten thousand" comparison: "Then myriads of men could not live" ("so könnten die Myriaden Menschen nicht leben"). There is an ambiguity here. Does "myriads" refer to all men or most men?

7:139-140 Eliminates the idea that a few could escape and earn salvation apart from God's grace: "Then would this little remnant not at all escape."

10:10 The elements are rearranged, introducing the "all" earlier in the sentence, but the idea of total damnation is weakened by the last statement: "Most of them (live) in vanity." See note 16 above.

Arabic-2 7:48 Neither "all" or "almost all" is directly attested, but the general sense of "all" is given: "Not we alone, but also the children with us."

7:138 A total re-working: "And the sinners are not enabled to be pious, yet can resemble them in some sense."

7:140 Omitted (intentionally?).

10:10 "Mankind" is substituted for "almost all".

Armenian 7:48 The last phrase reads: "And we are alienated from the reality of life." Violet I thinks that the "omnes omnino" from the first of the verse belongs at the end. In either case, "all" seems to be favored rather than "almost all".

7:138 Eliminates the "not one in ten thousand" comparison: "Nothing would be able to liberate the body".

7:140 The apodosis from MSS ACD supports the idea of a remnant by merit.²²

10:10 "Almost all" is deleted: "A multitude returns to corruption". The result is ambiguous, but perhaps favors "all" over "almost all".

Georgian 7:48 Blake renders as: "sed sic quoddam sicut nos²³ cunctos creavit", and notes that the text is corrupt, but it would appear to support the idea of "all" rather than "almost all".

7:138 Eliminates the "not one in ten thousand comparison, turning the phrase into a question: "usque quo potuerint decem millia gentes hominum vivere?" The effect is to eliminate the idea of a remnant by merit.

7:140 Eliminates the idea of a remnant by merit: "There would remain not even one".

10:10 Lacuna in the MS.

With this brief outline of the manner in which each version has deviated in the key passages, a summary may be given of the results, first by passage, then by version. The determining factor in the summaries that follow is whether

22. The protasis given by all four MSS used by Violet I (Petermann), reads: "If he did not accuse and did not punish..." But MS B gives the following apodosis: "everyone together would be blessed with those few". The apodosis of ACD reads: "no one would remain from the whole multitude, except those few". MS B gives the only sensible apodosis for the protasis as it stands, but that bears no relationship whatever to the readings of the other versions. Violet II (p. 105) suggests striking the negatives as a means of bringing the version into line with the Latin and Syriac.

23. Underlining is Blake's italics.

or not the idea of a remnant is supported or rejected. The former idea is indicated by "almost all", and the latter by "all".

(2) Remnant (by Merit): Summary by Passage

	"almost all" (will perish)	"all" (will perish)
3:36	Syriac Arabic-2 Armenian Georgian	Ethiopic (intentional [?] omission) Arabic-1 (probably)
7:48	Syriac (probably)	Ethiopic Arabic-1 (probably) Arabic-2 (possibly) Armenian Georgian (probably)
7:138	Syriac	Ethiopic Arabic-1 (probably) Arabic-2 (possibly) Armenian Georgian (probably)
7:139-140	Syriac Ethiopic Armenian (possibly)	Arabic-1 Arabic-2 (intentional [?] omission) Georgian
10:10	Arabic-1 (possibly)	Syriac Ethiopic Arabic-2 Armenian (possibly)

(3) Summary of the Tendency of Each Version

Syriac. The Syriac clearly deviates from the Latin only in 10:10 where it states that all will perish. Elsewhere (probably 7:48 included), it supports the idea of a remnant.

Ethiopic. Of the five passages under consideration, only in 7:139-140 does the Ethiopic support the idea of a remnant. Its failure to do so in

3:36 may be accidental, but its apparently deliberate tendency elsewhere makes that unlikely.

Arabic-1. The tendency of the Arabic-1 is more difficult to evaluate because it is so free with the text. Only in 10:10 does it seem to favor the idea of a remnant, but only in 7:140 does it definitely go against that idea. In the remaining three passages it seems to tend towards the view that man cannot merit salvation or gain it apart from God's mercy. On balance, then, it would seem to reject the idea of a remnant or a remnant by merit.

Arabic-2. The tendency of the Ar-2 version is not as clear-cut as the Ethiopic, but again it seems to reject the idea of a remnant. It retains that idea only in 3:36, and specifically rejects it in 10:10. The translator-interpreter apparently struggled with 7:138-140. This suggests that he was in fact reacting against the idea of a remnant by merit which is implied there. The remaining passage (7:48) is somewhat ambiguous, but probably inclines towards the rejection of the idea of a remnant.

Armenian. It is perhaps presumptuous to class the Armenian as a version of IV Ezra given its great freedom in reworking the text. As an interpreter^{ation} of the text, though, it gives evidence that the idea of a remnant or a remnant by merit was a problem. The only unambiguous retention of the idea is in 3:36. In 7:140 there is a hint of the original text, but the passage is so thoroughly reworked that it can only be taken as evidence of the struggles of the "translator" as he attempted to produce a text that was acceptable theologically. He states his ideas more clearly in 7:48 and 7:138 where he emphatically rejects the idea of a remnant and in 10:10, the effect is the same, though with an element of ambiguity. On balance, the Armenian would appear to reject the idea of a remnant.

Georgian. This version, which, according to Blake is related to the Ethiopic, shows the same tendency as the Ethiopic in rejecting the idea of a remnant, albeit in a slightly different manner. The Georgian is extant for four of the passages under consideration. Of these, only in 3:36 does it retain the idea of a remnant. In 7:140 it definitely rejects the idea, and only slightly less vigorously so in 7:48 and 7:138, though the text in 7:48 is apparently somewhat corrupt.

Looking at the versions as a whole, one discovers a rather interesting pattern. Whereas in the five passages under consideration, the Latin implies a remnant by merit (3:36, 7:138, 140) or a remnant (7:48; 10:10), the Syriac retains the idea of a remnant in four (or perhaps three) out of the five. All the other versions retain it in only one of the five, or at the most two (Armenian) (Georgian one out of four). Now in view of the vastly superior text yielded by the Latin and Syriac, a superiority recognized by all serious scholars of the book, it is a dubious procedure to overturn a reading of the Latin and/or the Syriac on the basis of the more paraphrastic oriental versions, and all the more so in view of their tendency, demonstrated above, to rework the text in a particular direction, and that, probably in the direction of a particular understanding of Pauline theology, as Hayman has suggested.²⁴ It can be concluded, then, that Violet II²⁵ is quite unjustified in drawing first on the Armenian, then on the Ar-1, Ar-2, and Ethiopic to support his "allesamt"

24. Hayman (op. cit., note 35) suggests that Romans 3:9, and 23 may have been influential.

25. Violet II, p. 80.

of 7:48, especially when either the Bensly or Ceriani-Gressmann explanation of the Syriac quite adequately aligns that version with the Latin. Likewise, in 10:10 where Violet II²⁶ thinks that the Latin is intentionally mitigating the "all" by the addition of "paene", his reliance on the Ethiopic for support of the Syriac is dubious, especially since the Arabic-1 leaves a vestige of the idea expressed in the Latin text, i.e., the idea of "most", not "all". But even if Violet is right in preferring the Syriac in 10:10, such an interpretation hardly strengthens the position of Harnisch and Brandenburger, since the passage comes after Ezra is supposed to have been brought into harmony with his angelic interlocutor. To be sure, Harnisch prefers to retain the "paene" of the Latin both in 7:48 and in 10:10 as pointers to the fact that Ezra is gradually accepting the angel's point of view.²⁷ In fact, Harnisch takes 7:139-140 as indicating the same thing.²⁸ But in reality, all these passages sprinkled through the heart of episodes of III and IV, and occurring even as early as 3:36, would seem to seriously weaken the basic hypothesis from which Brandenburger and Harnisch are arguing, namely, that Ezra represents a skeptical point of view which emphasizes man's destiny as a "fate".

From a more positive point of view, the above discussion of the versions points to the retention of the idea of personal responsibility in the Ezra speeches, for there is clear evidence that those passages in IV Ezra which imply

26. Ibid., p. 136.

27. Harnisch, p. 230.

28. Ibid.

a remnant of righteous survivors were troublesome to the Christian translators. Such an idea was apparently too easily connected with the idea that some, even if it was only the occasional saint, could merit salvation apart from God's grace. Furthermore, the tendency to modify the text in these instances appears to be most prominent in the more unreliable versions. The Latin first, and Syriac second, generally support the readings which indicate that the Ezra speeches do allow for the viability of individual responsibility and individual merit. Nevertheless, Ezra does contend that the vast majority will be lost, even if, in theory, they have sufficient freedom of choice to determine their own destiny. So as a means of establishing how strongly Ezra would hold to a concept of individual responsibility, it is necessary to determine how Ezra understands the basis for man's final condemnation, a point which will now be taken up. Thereafter, its natural corollary, namely, the basis for man's salvation, must also be considered.

c. The Basis for Man's Condemnation or Salvation

i. The Basis for Man's Condemnation. Specific statements which affirm that man's condemnation is based on man's willful rejection of God's law are ready-to-hand from Uriel's side of the dialogue (7:21ff, 72, 105; 8:56; cf. 9:10, 19). But any such statements are missing from the Ezra speeches. There is, however, no evidence that Ezra disputes the fact that the rejection of the law should be the proper basis for man's condemnation. What little there is from Ezra that indicates his attitude to the law, shows a rather positive appreciation of it.²⁹ In 3:20 he blames God, not the law, for man's inability to live aright. Likewise when he mentions the law in 4:23 and

5:27, he shows no animosity or negative attitudes whatsoever, at least insofar as the law itself is concerned. In episode IV, he speaks rapturously about the glories of the law which "remains in its glory" even though the people perish (9:37; cf. 9:32). Thus Ezra has no complaint against the law which God so gloriously bequeathed to Israel (cf. 3:17-19). In fact, he rather implies that God ought to take it more seriously in his government of the world, for Israel's record vis-à-vis the law, while not particularly commendable, is nevertheless better than that of anyone else (3:28-34; cf. 5:29). While there is no explicit confirmation from Ezra that each man should be judged on his individual attitude towards the law,³⁰ this can be inferred from the more general statements about the law from Ezra as noted above, and from those passages where he admits that there are a few who will be saved and who apparently can keep the law, thereby deserving their reward (3:36; 7:17, 45, 122, 125; 8:26, 33).

If it can be said with justification that Ezra has no complaints about

29. Oesterley (pp. xxiii-xxv) and Myers (p. 171) are perhaps too concerned with possible Pauline parallels to properly evaluate Ezra's attitude towards the law. For example, Oesterley arrives at a strange interpretation of 3:20 when he states that "the Almighty permitted evil to remain in men in order that the Law might enable them to overcome it" (p. xxiv). (So also Schiefer, "Das Problem der Sünde," p. 322, who speaks of God's pedagogical intention in leaving the evil heart in man). Oesterley also states that the fruit of the law was death, and notes the parallel with Romans 5:20 (p. 26)! Myers thinks that the reference to "labor" in connection with the keeping of the law in 3:33 indicates that the keeping of the law was no longer a joy (p. 171; cf. also IV Ezra 7:89).

30. Note Box's contention (p. xxxix) that in "S", it is "the acceptance of the Law that is the standard by which men must be judged at the last, not the observance of it." Rössler (*op. cit.*, pp. 107-108) citing 7:45 (Ezra) and 7:72 (Uriel) notes that IV Ezra understands sin, not in the pharisaic sense of the transgression of the individual command, but rather in the "apocalyptic" sense of the denial of the law as a whole.

the law, he nevertheless does have complaints, and they bring elements to the front which Ezra knows are beyond his own control: Adam's sin and the evil heart. These aspects will be discussed in greater detail below, so it will suffice to note here, that whatever bearing Adam's sin and the evil heart may be said to have on man's future destiny, there is nothing from the mouth of Ezra to suggest that these elements mitigate man's responsibility before God. Now, if Ezra admits (reluctantly) that man is responsible for his own destruction, what would he say about man's role in assuring his own salvation? This is the question that must be considered next.

ii. The Basis for Man's Salvation. The doctrine of salvation in IV Ezra will be considered here both in its human and in its divine dimensions. On the human level, the discussion centers on the question of whether obedience or faith (and belief) is the more important element. On the divine level, it is a question of whether the author emphasizes God's justice or his mercy as the predominant factor in God's dealings with mankind. In the discussion that follows, the human dimension will be considered first, followed by an analysis of the Godward aspects.

(a) The Human Dimension of Salvation: Obedience vs. Faith and Belief. In discussing the human side of the salvation question, one must recognize that in IV Ezra, the author at times focuses more on Israel the nation, and sometimes he is concerned more with the individual. As suggested in an earlier chapter, his concern for the individual is broad enough to include all mankind. In a sense, then, the author is a universalist. Yet his concern for the Gentiles as such, is never really explicit, but is implied, first by the arguments placed in the mouth of Uriel as these are seen in tension with Ezra's laments, and second, by the frequent creation references from the

mouth of Ezra. In the consolation episodes, however, there is very little in the way of "vengeance" that enters the discussion, even though there is no specific mention of salvation for the Gentiles. This is in contrast with II Baruch which, in spite of notable words of vengeance (e.g., II Bar. 82:1-9), specifies that those Gentiles who have not oppressed Israel can be saved (II Bar. 72:4-6; cf. 42:5). Accordingly, some scholars have expressed the opinion that IV Ezra is much narrower in its outlook than is II Baruch.³¹ Such a conclusion is only possible if one overlooks the strong current of implied universalism which permeates the Ezra speeches of episodes I-IV. There is much greater sympathy in IV Ezra for the weaknesses of human nature and the lot of humanity as a whole. II Baruch takes a rather superficial view of the problem of moral evil and does not begin to approach the depth of feeling demonstrated by IV Ezra. Yet, in spite of this implied concern for the Gentiles as a part of all mankind, IV Ezra never alludes to any means whereby a Gentile might be saved. He hints that exceptional individuals may be saved, possibly including Gentiles (cf. 3:36), but he gives no indication as to how even a good Gentile might be granted salvation. One can only assume that the normal procedures for proselytes would apply, and that the Gentiles who have not oppressed Israel can be granted salvation in the end.³² It would appear, then, that salvation both for the nation and individual is discussed in terms of Jewish norms. Although there is a general transition at 7:15-16 from a primary interest in national salvation to a primary interest

31. See note 17 in chapter III.

32. So Klausner, *op. cit.*, pp. 360, 363. See note 17 in chapter III.

in personal salvation, followed by a return to interest in Israel (the nation?) in episode IV (10:16ff), one cannot always be certain just when the author is speaking about the nation or when he is speaking about the individual, or whether he might be referring to both at the same time.³³ In the discussion that follows, "Israel" may refer either to the nation or the individual, and if further delineation is necessary in a given context, it will be mentioned in the appropriate place.

One of the most notable aspects of the teaching of IV Ezra about salvation is the emphasis on personal responsibility which comes from the angelic messenger (cf. 7:21, 71, 105; 8:56; 9:10, 19). In particular, there are two statements that stand out: in 9:7 Uriel mentions that "works or faith" can save a person from the dangers of the last days, and in 13:23 a similar statement is made by the angel except that there it is "works and faith". Since both of these statements come from the divine side of the dialogue, it is doubtful whether "faith" in these passages should be interpreted as "confidence". Given Uriel's emphasis on individual responsibility, "faithfulness" would perhaps be a more accurate rendition. But the situation with Ezra is rather different. Although in the end, Ezra and God are on the same side of the dialogue, so to speak, as attested especially by Ezra's praise of God in 13:57-58 and his admonition to Israel to rule over their minds and discipline their hearts in 14:34, in the pre-consolation episodes the emphasis given in the Ezra speeches differs considerably from that given by Uriel. While Ezra certainly hints at the importance of personal responsibility, a

33. See quotation from Keulers, p. 46, cited in note 51, chapter II above.

point that has been emphasized above, he makes no attempt to argue that Israel has fulfilled her responsibilities and therefore deserves her inheritance on the basis of faithfulness. He is prepared to claim very little more other than that Israel has believed God's covenants (3:32; 5:29). The implications of this stance assumed by Ezra must be noted more closely.

Ezra's hesitation to claim merit for Israel as a people is evident right from the first in the initial prayer of chapter 3. In the review of God's dealings with his forefathers, Ezra mentions Adam (3:4ff, 21, 26) Noah (3:11), Abraham (3:13f), Isaac (3:15), Jacob (3:15ff), and David (3:23f), but nowhere does he appeal to the righteous behavior of these forefathers as having any bearing on God's dealing with them. The emphasis is rather on God's electing, choosing, and loving, apart from the behavior of the people involved (cf. 3:11, 13-15, 23). Then in 3:28-34 Ezra draws a comparison between Israel and Babylon, but he seems less concerned about Israel's superior behavior than he is about the fact that she is less wicked than Babylon. Twice (3:28, 31) he asks if the deeds of Babylon are any better, and in 3:34 he asks God to weigh Israel's iniquities (not her good works!) against those of Babylon. In the course of his complaint he refers to Israel as God's people (3:30), and he does go so far as to claim that when it comes to knowing God and believing his covenants, no one has excelled the tribes of Jacob (3:32). But nowhere does he even approach the suggestion which arises in some of the lament psalms, that Israel is innocent of wrongdoing.³⁴ Israel's punishment only appears unjust

34. Most notably in the communal lament, Ps. 44, see esp. 44:18 (EVV 17). See also the individual laments, Pss. 5, 7, 17, 26.

when compared with the experience of Babylon. The final two verses of the chapter (3:35-36) probably should not be understood as directly continuing the comparison. If the "so" of 3:35b represents an original ןִּד = "rightly" ($\checkmark \text{ןִּד}$) as suggested earlier,³⁵ then the verses provide an appropriate conclusion to the chapter as well as a transition to what follows. In any event, the final phrase of the chapter in 3:36 simply claims that no nation has kept the commandments, only the occasional righteous individual.³⁶

The emphasis on God's election rather than Israel's merit as the basis for hope, continues to predominate in the balance of episodes I and II. In 4:23, Ezra refers to the people whom God loved; in 4:24 he claims that "we are not worthy to obtain mercy"; and in 4:25 he expresses the hope that God will do something for "his name by which we are called". In 4:38 he suggests that "all of us are full of ungodliness" and that this has somehow hindered the arrival of the end-time. At the beginning of episode II, Ezra recites a series of metaphors to illustrate God's act of election (5:23-27). In the concluding words of his appeal, the only claim which he makes for God's people is that they have "believed your covenants" (5:29).³⁷ But he spares no words

35. See chapter IV, A, 2, d, (iii), above.

36. It might be noted here that this seems to be the note on which the book closes as well, for in 14:34, Ezra is addressing Israel as individuals who will receive their reward after death.

37. In 5:27, the Latin speaks of a law "approved by all" ("ab omnibus"). Box (p. 54), prefers the Ethiopic reading: "which you approved out of all (laws)", implying the superiority of the Jewish law over all other laws. Gunkel (p. 361), noting Deut. 4:8, also prefers this rationale and cites the Syriac in support, apparently taking ܐܢܗܝ in a partitive sense ("unter allen"). But Gunkel errs in citing the Syriac with the Ethiopic as having a second person singular verb. The Syriac has the third singular Ethpe. ܐܘܕܝܟܐ . In any case, even if the author intended the phrase to mean that the law was approved by all Israel, it would imply nothing more than the statements in 3:32 and 5:29 which state that Israel had believed God's covenants.

in seeking to establish the close ties between God and his people; in 5:27 he states that God not only chose for himself one people, but he loved them, and gave them his law; in 5:28 Ezra refers to Israel as God's "only one". Finally, in 5:30, he exclaims that if God really hates his people, he should punish them with his own hands. The emphasis throughout the prayer is the same as it was in episode I: God's election is the basis for Israel's hope.

There is a further reference at the beginning of episode III to God's election of Israel. In 6:54, Ezra speaks of the "people whom you have chosen", adding that the world was created for them (6:55). When referring to the characteristics of Israel in 6:58, he again avoids any mention of meritorious behavior on the part of Israel; rather, Israel is God's first-born, only-begotten, beloved,³⁸ and most dear. For most of episode III, however, Ezra is more concerned about the individual than he is about the nation. And he assumes a certain dichotomy in his approach, for he admits that there are some who merit salvation (7:17, 45, 122, 125, 138-140; 8:26-30, 33), but frequently he links to such statements a searching question or a bitter lament about the fate of the sinners who cannot look forward to eternal bliss. Thus, in 7:18 he claims that the righteous can endure present distress because of the hope of reward--but what about the wicked? In 7:46,

38. The Latin has "aemulatorem" which apparently is the basis of the RSV "zealous for thee". The Syriac has ܠܕܝܢ "kinsman" or "neighbor". The reading of "beloved" above reflects a suggestion by Volkmar (pp. 53-54) and accepted by Box (p. 96), that "aemulatorem" may be a corruption of "amatorem", thus pointing to ἀγαπητός for which "amator" is sometimes used. Box also thinks that the "carissimum" (most dear) of the Latin may have been a marginal gloss. This would leave only three characteristics instead of four, but the Syriac also has four characteristics.

he says: "Blessed are those who are alive and who keep your commandments! --but what about those for whom I prayed?" In 7:122, he claims that God will defend those who have led a pure life--but "we" have walked in most wicked ways! and in 7:125 he recognizes that some faces will shine--but "ours" shall be blacker than darkness. In 7:138-140 and 8:26-36, however, there are hints of the solution which Ezra would like to see God implement. The first passage is part of the midrash on Ex. 34:6-7, and though it is couched in terms which suggest a paean of praise for God, the context has the effect of turning the praise into an appeal.³⁹ The author's organization of the material may be presented diagrammatically as follows:

Bitter Lament	-	Harsh Rejection	-	<u>APPEAL</u>	-	Harsh Rejection	-	Bitter Lament
Ezra		Uriel		Ezra		Uriel		Ezra
7:116-126		7:127-131		7:132-140		8:1-3		8:4-14

When presented in this way, the midrash forms the heart of a carefully balanced unit of thought which proceeds from lament to rejection to "appeal" and then back to rejection and lament. Within the midrash, Ezra suggests that if God did not give of his goodness to relieve men of their iniquities, not one in ten thousand could have life (7:138); likewise he concludes by saying that if God did not pardon his creatures and blot out the multitude of their sins, only a very few would remain of the innumerable multitude (7:139-140). Thus Ezra is aware of those who will be saved by merit, but those are very few, so he appeals to God's goodness and mercy to save the others. He expands on this thought in chapter 8, for, after admitting the "failings" of God's people

39. See note 6 in chapter III for the remarks of Simonsen and Boyarin substantiating this suggestion.

(8:17), he asks God to look to the righteous rather than to the wicked, and he makes this appeal by means of five parallel statements (8:26-30). He seems to be appealing to the merits of the few (cf. 3:36) as the basis for the salvation of the many (cf. 7:102ff).⁴⁰ Though Ezra goes on to refer again to the reward of the righteous in 8:33 (irony?), his major emphasis is on man's need for mercy: "But because of us sinners, you are called merciful" (8:31); "For if you desire to have pity on us, who have no works of righteousness, then you will be called merciful" (8:32); "For in this, O Lord, will your righteousness (Latin ϕ MSS and Ar-2) and goodness be declared, when you are merciful to those who have no store of good works" (8:36). So while recognizing, in theory, that good works are the basis of salvation, Ezra realizes that this will suffice for only the few, so God must show mercy on those who cannot obey. Interestingly enough, Ezra has hitherto said very little about God's justice and righteousness, though the reader certainly gets the impression that God's justice and righteousness has very much been brought into question. But here he says that God's righteousness⁴¹ can only be firmly established when he is merciful! As one modern Jew has stated: "In his admission of the insufficiency of the Law as the means of redemption,

40. See note 89, chapter IV.

41. As indicated above, "righteousness" is only attested by the Latin MSS and by the Ar-2. On this basis, Violet II has omitted it from his translation, but it has been retained by Box, Myers, RSV and NEB. To say that God's righteousness (justicia) is established by his mercy is such a striking statement and raises such interesting possibilities for the interpretation of the book, that it is difficult to evaluate the MSS evidence disinterestedly. What the author apparently means, assuming "righteousness" to be original, is, that God would prove himself to be unjust if he were to condemn man since the evil heart has made man incapable of obedience. God's righteousness is thus "negatively" established when he is merciful, i.e., he is not unjust.

IV Ezra dangerously approaches the Paulinian position."⁴²

In episode IV, Ezra returns to a more specific concern with Israel and the law. In his initial prayer, though he admits that the people perish while the law endures, he is not inclined at all to posit any inadequacy as far as the law is concerned: it remains in its glory (9:37). Significantly, as Ezra reviews the events connected with Israel's receiving the law, he makes no mention whatever of meritorious behavior on the part of God's people: though the fathers received the law, they perished because they did not keep what had been sown in them (9:33).

In the consolation episodes, there is very little discussion of the basis for man's salvation. In the Eagle Vision, God delivers his people "in mercy" (12:34), but nothing is said of any merit on their part. The Son of Man Vision contains two brief references dealing with obedience. In 13:23, it is said that the one who brings the peril at that time will protect those who have works and faith, and in 13:42 the ten tribes are said to depart to a more distant land so that they might keep their statutes which they had not kept in their own land. The concluding admonition to Ezra contains praise for him because, among other things, he has searched out God's law (13:54). This declaration of Ezra's worthiness links up with the several other statements which place him among those who are worthy (6:31ff; 7:77, 104, 8:48ff; 10:39; 12:9, 36; 14:9), so in spite of Ezra's appeal for some basis for salvation

42. Cohon, *op. cit.*, p. 289. There is perhaps one further pointer in episode III which suggests the author's inclination to depend on "grace" rather than merit, and that comes in the concluding speech by Uriel. Here, God is said to have saved his one grape and one plant "with great difficulty" (9:21). In the words of Box, this preservation of a small remnant "must be attributed entirely to the divine grace" (p. 205).

other than obedience and merit, the author apparently feels that in the end, personal worthiness is the only secure basis for salvation--his hopes for mercy gradually fade and his concluding admonition to the people speaks of ruling over the mind and disciplining the heart (14:34), for after all, there is a righteous judge (14:32) who will reward them in the judgment after death (14:34-35). Even here, however, the author speaks of receiving mercy after death (14:34).

By way of summary, it could be said that the author of IV Ezra knows of one sure way of salvation, and that is by obedience. But by the admission of both Uriel and Ezra, very few will qualify for eternal life on this basis; accordingly, through the mouth of Ezra, the author pleads for some means of saving the multitude of sinners. God's righteousness would really be established if he would show mercy to those with no store of good works (8:36). Though he argues his case with great earnestness and pathos, the author apparently realizes that his hopes must be disappointed, and the closing episodes represent his acceptance of the traditional basis of salvation, namely, the merit and obedience of the individual. Though episodes V and VI seem to imply some sort of national salvation, the author's last word in VII is concerned with the individual and the reward after death, and the whole of chapter 14 implies that obedience to the law is the basis of man's final reward.

(b) The Godward Dimension of Salvation: Mercy vs. Justice and Righteousness. From the preceding section, it might be concluded that Ezra is primarily concerned that God demonstrate mercy, not justice, but that is only partially correct. When Ezra is lamenting the human situation, he is

indeed seeking mercy, but when he is concerned more directly with Israel, and that is primarily in episodes I and II, there is a concern for divine justice, if not explicitly stated, at least implied. When Ezra does question God's justice, he is by no means claiming that Israel is righteous and undeserving of punishment. His complaint is that Israel is less wicked than Babylon (3:28, 31, 34; 5:29); but what is more, he buttresses his complaints by appealing to two additional arguments, namely the doctrine of election and the doctrine of creation. The latter is more apropos for the individual (cf. 8:7, 24, 44-45), but Ezra also uses it to support national claims as well, for was not the world made for Israel (6:55, 59)? In addition, Israel is a creature of God's own hands (8:45). But in view of Israel's admitted guilt, it is the doctrine of election which he uses to maximum advantage: hadn't God promised that he would never forsake the descendants of Abraham? (3:15). Is not Israel called by God's own name (4:25)? Why, Lord, after choosing Israel, loving her and giving her the law, have you scattered her, the one, among the many? If you really hate your people, then you ought to punish them by your own hand (5:27-30)! Although in modern terminology, one would certainly describe the above situation as an attack on God's righteousness and justice, in the Ezra speeches themselves, there is very little usage of the vocabulary that might point to the typical OT terminology which employs the Hebrew roots $\text{P} \text{ T} \text{ X}$ and $\text{A} \text{ D} \text{ W}$. It is perhaps not surprising though, that Ezra does not come right out and attack God's $\text{P} \text{ P} \text{ T} \text{ X}$ or his $\text{A} \text{ D} \text{ W} \text{ N}$ --a frontal attack using such key covenant terms would probably be too emotive for the author's purposes. In chapter 5, however, the term judgment ($\text{K} \text{ L} \text{ T}$) occurs four times, and may, at least in some of the instances, point back to

an original $\Delta \delta \omega \nu$, though the author may have intentionally introduced an element of ambiguity here. The most likely candidate for this usage is in 5:34 where Ezra is seeking to understand "the way of the most High and to search out part of his judgment." In 5:40, Ezra is told that he cannot discover "my judgment or the goal of the love that I have promised my people". The "goal" here would tend to give an eschatological flavor to "judgment". In 5:42, God's judgment is likened to a circle, i.e., there is no impartiality. This passage could easily apply both to a trait of God's government and to the final denouement as well. In 5:43, Ezra is concerned that God show his judgment the sooner, which could conceivably refer to a demonstration of God's justice, but more likely it refers to the judgment of the end-time. Aside from these passages, there is very little in the Ezra speeches by way of direct description of God's character or of his method of government. In the first two episodes, the only significant reference would appear to be in 4:24 where Ezra claims that God's people are unable to obtain mercy ($\kappa \omega \tau \ddot{\iota}$). Aside from those passages where Ezra uses the polite phrase "If I have found favor ($\kappa \omega \tau \ddot{\iota}$)..." (4:44, 5:56; 6:11; 7:75, 102; cf. also 7:104 from Uriel), this instance in 4:24 would appear to be the only mention by Ezra until 7:132, of the type of concepts represented by the roots $\kappa \omega \tau \ddot{\iota}, \tau \omega \tau \ddot{\iota}, \mu \omega \tau \ddot{\iota}$. With the midrash on Ex. 34:6-7 in 7:132ff, however, Ezra begins to use more freely those terms which apply directly to God and to God's treatment of mankind. The terms he prefers reflect a preoccupation with the characteristics which indicate God's mercy. In the midrash itself, the following characteristics are noted: God is merciful, gracious, patient, bountiful, abundant in compassion, Giver, and Judge. The first six clearly emphasize the merciful aspects of God.

Even Judge, here, refers to God as one who forgives sin, which, as has been frequently noted, suggests either that the word has become corrupt (ܐܡܘܢ/ܐܡܘܢ), or, more likely, that a qualifying phrase such as ܡܪܝܬܐ has dropped out.⁴³ In the balance of the book,⁴⁴ the Syriac text has preserved "merciful" (ܡܪܝܬܐ) in 8:32, and various cognates from the root ܡܪܬ in 8:11, 31, 36, 45 (twice); 11:46; 12:48 and 14:34 (cf. also, "If I have found favor..." in 8:42; 12:7; 14:22). All of these contexts are dealing with God's relationships with man. By contrast, the Hebrew root ܡܪܬ, at least insofar as it applies to God, is possibly the underlying original in only four instances: 8:12, 36; 10:16; 14:32.⁴⁵ But of these four instances, three are of considerable significance for the interpretation of the book.⁴⁶ In 8:36, at the conclusion of Ezra's prayer, righteousness is linked with goodness and is said to be established when God is merciful to those with no store of good works. Another crucial passage where the root ܡܪܬ is probably original is 10:16. As pointed out in the analysis of the many/few argument, this passage represents the transition

43. See note 11 above.

44. From a methodological point of view, after the transition in 10:16, the divine side of the dialogue can also be included as providing data for the author's concept of God. Before that point, the speeches of Ezra are taken as the significant "source" for the author's views.

45. In addition, 13:57-58 should perhaps be mentioned here as implying a concept somewhat related to that implied by the root ܡܪܬ. Here Ezra praises God "because he governs the times". Also of interest is 11:46 where "judgment" is given a very positive nuance by being placed in parallel with "mercy". After the disappearance of the eagle, the world "may hope for the judgment (ܡܪܬ) and mercy (ܡܪܬ) of him who made it".

46. The only "casual" usage of the term would appear to be in 8:12 where Ezra tells God: "You have brought him man up in your righteousness...". It must be noted, however, that even here, the term occurs in one of Ezra's most stirring appeals.

from the concern for the many back to the one, and it also seems to summarize in a single statement the struggles of the author: to admit that God is just. Finally in Ezra's last address to the people, God is described as a "righteous" judge (14:32). Admittedly, the judgment here also has to do with mercy (14:34), but it is remarkable that the author could use the epithet in such a positive manner considering what has gone before.⁴⁷

The emphasis in the above discussion has been on the Ezra speeches, at least up to the point of transition in 10:16, but there are two additional hints in the Uriel speeches of episodes I-III that help to establish the author's concern for God's justice, even though the terminology is sparse from the lips of Ezra. First, there is the parable of the forest and the waves in 4:13-21. After relating the parable, Uriel says to Ezra: "If now you were a judge between them, which would you seek to justify, and which to condemn?" (4:18). Ezra replies that each has devised a foolish plan (4:19), to which Uriel says: "You have judged rightly, but why have you not judged so in your own case?" (4:20). Such a succinct statement of the issues the author has hesitated to place in Ezra's mouth, so he lets Uriel tell it like it is through a parable! A similar case appears in 7:19 where Uriel exclaims: "You are not a better judge than God, or wiser than the Most High!" In both cases Uriel blurts out the true implications of Ezra's complaints--namely, that God's effective rule of the world has been brought seriously into question.

47. M. J. Fiedler deals briefly with IV Ezra and II Baruch in "Δικαιοσύνη in der diaspora-jüdischen und intertestamentarischen Literatur," JSJ 1 (1970), pp. 141-142, though as might be surmised from the title, he is more interested in the Hellenistic aspects than he is in the Hebraic.

By way of summary, it may simply be said that Ezra both questions God's justice and appeals for his mercy. In the words of 8:36, only when God is merciful can he truly be just. But the most notable feature of the author's method is his apparent hesitation to speak directly of God's righteousness or justice. In the earlier episodes, he occasionally allows the issues to be stated rather bluntly by Uriel (e.g., 4:18-20; 7:19), and perhaps in the (deliberately?) ambiguous usage of "judgment" in 5:34, 40, 42-43 the issue is also cautiously placed on the lips of Ezra. For those rare occasions when the author has chosen to use a probable cognate of PTX with reference to God, he has selected passages of strategic importance: at the end of Ezra's famous prayer (8:36), at the transition point of the book (10:16), and in Ezra's final address to the people (14:32). Considering the issues raised in the book, one could almost say that it was a struggle for the author to speak of God's righteousness at all, but speak of it he must, so he used the term rarely, but in highly significant contexts. On the other hand, the author speaks much more freely of God's mercy, the clearest example being the midrash on Ex^{34:}6-7. In conclusion, it would perhaps not be too bold to suggest that it is the God of mercy whom the author wishes to serve, but in the end, it is the righteous judge who remains.

d. Individual Responsibility in IV Ezra: Summary and Comparison with II Baruch

In summarizing the evidence for a concept of personal responsibility in IV Ezra, the most significant factor is the difference in viewpoint between Ezra and Uriel in episodes I-III. When the dialogue centers on Israel the

nation, then it is Ezra who seems to be complaining about God's justice while Uriel simply claims the inscrutability of the divine plans. When the discussion shifts to the fate of the individual, the roles are reversed as Uriel appeals to the firm rule of law while Ezra desperately seeks to find some means of evading the inevitable condemnation of the many. Both Ezra and Uriel agree that a few will be saved, though Ezra frequently makes the additional point that all men are sinners. Ezra does not attempt to prove man's innocence, but he does concede that some men are capable of attaining salvation on the basis of their own merit. His overriding concern, especially in episode III, is to appeal for the many who are perishing by seeking God's mercy. To paraphrase his argument: Blessed are those who obey (7:45; 8:33)! But for those who have no store of good works, God must be merciful. Only then can he truly be righteous (8:36). In thus formulating his appeal, Ezra does not negate the importance of personal responsibility, but is simply appealing to God to go a step beyond "cold justice"⁴⁸ and even save those without merit. There are additional subtle reasons as to why Ezra appeals in this manner (e.g., Adam's sin, evil yetzer), and these will be brought out in the discussion below, but first it would be well to note how the concept of individual responsibility in IV Ezra compares with that of its sister apocalypse, II Baruch.

48. The more restricted usage of "righteousness" and "judgment" to a context of "justitia distributiva" apparently is a late development within Judaism. Koch (op. cit., p. 29) notes that the term "righteousness" is not used in the OT in the sense of a "justitia distributiva", and even in legal contexts, the substantives רָצָה and נִפְתָּר are never used in connection with punishment, but only with the idea of "rewarding" ("belohnendes"). Eichrodt II, p. 487, speaks of the "deplorable narrowing of outlook" when the concept of a "justitia distributiva" developed in post-exilic Judaism. For the positive connotations possible in connection with the root לָדַן in the OT, see Leon Morris, The Biblical Doctrine of Judgment, London, 1960, pp. 7-25.

The numerous similarities and contrasts between IV Ezra and II Baruch have already been noted in chapter III, but of particular importance here is the greater dialogue tension which is evident in IV Ezra. That point has been noted by both Brandenburger⁴⁹ and Harnisch⁵⁰ and can be substantiated by literary analysis. Because Baruch so quickly joins ranks with his heavenly interlocutor, in most contexts there is very little difference between the concepts placed in the mouth of Baruch and those that are spoken by God. There are hints of despair (e.g., 14:14ff), but both Baruch and the angel speak of just condemnation for rejection of God's law (e.g., 13:9-12; 15:5-6; 48:40; 54:14-15; 55:2; 84:5) and of preservation if one keeps the law (48:22; 51:3, 7; 84:6). The author of II Baruch speaks much of judgment (e.g., 5:2; 13:8; 15:5; 20:4; 44:6; 48:27; 78:5; 84:1; 85:9), but also of mercy (e.g., 48:18; 49:1; 71:1; 75:2, 5; 77:7; 78:7; 81:4; 84:11). In general, he does not particularly fear the former and is quite confident of the latter. His confidence is especially evident in the so-called Epistle of Baruch (78:1-87:1). The author of II Baruch does not show the same depth of agony over the human dilemma as does the author of IV Ezra. He can proclaim with considerable certainty that each man is the Adam of his own soul (54:19). In principle, the author of IV Ezra would agree with that assessment, but with much less enthusiasm, for he has sensed that Adam's sin and/or the evil heart had somehow laid claim to part of his soul as well. These other potential bearers of the responsibility for evil must now be taken up and discussed in greater detail.

49. Brandenburger, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

50. Harnisch, p. 73.

2. Responsibility for Evil Placed on Adam

Within the context of the present study, the question as to whether or not Adam's sin is thought to represent the origin of evil in the human realm is not quite the same question as that which seeks to determine the effect that Adam's sin had on his descendants. The present discussion is more concerned with the second question and seeks to determine to what extent the author of IV Ezra would blame Adam for present evils.

In IV Ezra, the sin of Adam is brought into a certain relationship with the evil heart, but since the evil heart tradition represents a different and more purely Jewish (i.e., non-Christian) attempt at theodicy, the intention here is to discuss the two traditions separately, at least initially. Accordingly, the discussion of those passages which speak of the sin of Adam and the evil heart together will be reserved primarily for a later section which deals with the evil heart tradition. The material relevant for the study of the effects of Adam's sin in IV Ezra has been discussed in detail by Brandenburger⁵¹ and Harnisch,⁵² but the significant passages need to be brought into the perspective of the present study. The present section will touch first on the effects of Adam's sin as far as physical evil is concerned, followed by a discussion of the effects which relate to moral evil. Finally, there will be a summary and a brief comparison with the material from II Baruch.

51. Brandenburger, op. cit., pp. 29-36, 54-58.

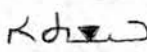
52. Harnisch, esp. pp. 106-120.

a. Adam's Sin and Physical Evil

There are four passages in IV Ezra which deal more or less directly with the effects which Adam's sin had on the physical aspects of life: 3:7; 4:30; 7:11, 116ff. The first passage, 3:7, in a straightforward manner attributes death for all directly to Adam's sin. Thus, the author of IV Ezra aligns himself with the view first expressed clearly in Ecclus. 25:24, namely, that death is an unnatural fate for man and was introduced by a primal sin.⁵³ The second passage, 4:30, belongs more properly to the discussion of the evil heart and the problem of moral evil since the evil heart in Adam is linked directly with ungodliness. Nevertheless, it can be noted here, that Uriel's comment about the sowing of the evil seed in the heart of Adam is in answer to Ezra's question of 4:22-25, which, though it touches on both moral and physical evil, is predominantly concerned with Israel's appalling physical status in the world. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the evil seed in Adam's heart was somehow linked both with the moral as well as the physical ills of the present evil age. In the third passage, 7:11f, Uriel describes the results of Adam's sin exclusively in terms of physical evil: "The entrances of the world were made narrow, sorrowful, toilsome, full of dangers and involved in great hardship" (7:12).⁵⁴ He adds, that unless the living pass through "difficult and vain experiences", they cannot attain the future

53. The idea is common in the writings of later Judaism, e.g., Apoc. Mos. 14:2; VitaAd 44:2-4; II En. 30:16; II Bar. 23:4; PsPhilo 13:8. See survey in chapter I, A, 2, a.

54. See notes 17-19 in chapter V.

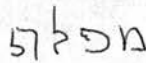
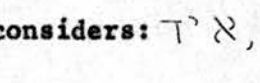
world (7:14). The fourth passage, 7:116ff, is more complex and will be fully discussed below in connection with moral evil, since the problems which the seer enumerates in the passage are almost exclusively moral problems. To what extent these are connected with Adam's sin will also be discussed below. As far as physical evil is concerned, one point is significant, and that is the use of the term "fall" in 7:118. In rendering the term as "fall", the RSV and NEB have closely followed the Latin "casus" which is unfortunately tainted with ecclesiastical connotations of original sin and moral evil.⁵⁵ The oriental versions, however, use much broader terms which include the connotation of physical evil at least as much as moral evil. The Syriac has  (evil), a reading also favored by the Ethiopic. Ar-1 has "sentence",⁵⁶ Ar-2 has "damage" (Schaden), and the Armenian reads "misfortune" (calamitas) or "suffering" (passio). Whatever the original Hebrew may have been,⁵⁷ it most likely indicated physical evil as much as it did moral evil, if not more so. From the analysis of the above passages, it can be said that IV Ezra adds nothing new to what earlier sources had said about the effects of Adam's sin on the physical world: death and a broad range of ills are the result of the primal sin.

b. Adam's Sin and Moral Evil

There are three passages in IV Ezra which link Adam with the first outbreak

55. See Harnisch's discussion on pp. 54ff.

56. "Urteil"; Violet I footnotes "Verhängnis" and "Tod" as alternate readings.

57. Violet II (p. 99) suggests: . Harnisch (p. 55) considers: .

of human moral evil: 3:20f; 4:30; 7:116ff. In the first two instances, the malady is linked in some way to the evil heart and later generations are also said to be affected by the same moral disease. Since both of these passages will be dealt with in detail in connection with the evil heart tradition, there remains to discuss here the significant and frequently-cited passage of 7:116-126. There are two questions of importance: first, does this passage teach that Adam somehow doomed his posterity to a sinful existence? Second, how is the concept of man's individual responsibility thereby affected?

With reference to the first question, the understanding of 7:118 as a separate entity in itself is significant, as is also the understanding of the passage as a whole. As mentioned above, the "fall" (casus) of 7:118 is misleading since it implies a connection with sin--a connotation which is quite absent from the terms selected by the oriental versions. Nevertheless, as both Brandenburger and Harnisch admit,⁵⁸ when the passage is taken as a whole, a causal relationship between Adam's sin and the sin of his posterity is difficult to deny. Interpreters ⁱⁿ of the past have not hesitated to claim that the author of IV Ezra holds to a concept of "original sin" which closely resembles that of the Pauline position in Romans 5.⁵⁹ But the hypothesis with which Brandenburger and Harnisch are operating allows them to claim that the concept of "Sündenverhängnis" contained therein is not the author's, but one against which he is polemicizing, since it comes from the mouth of Ezra.⁶⁰

58. Brandenburger, op. cit., p. 35; cited with approval by Harnisch, p. 55.

59. E.g., Rosenthal, p. 45; Schiefer, "Das Problem der Sünde," p. 323f; Oesterley, p. xxxix.

60. Harnisch (p. 52) actually pushes his argument one stage beyond Adam in

But the important point for this present study is to establish whether or not the passage actually teaches that the sin of Adam's posterity has been caused by Adam's sin. This can only be determined by a study of the text.

Looking first at the series of questions more or less as they stand in the Latin and Syriac text,⁶¹ one discovers a total of seven, not counting: "O Adam, what have you done!" which is rather more an exclamation than a mere question.⁶² The last six questions which come after 7:118 demonstrate a parallel type of sentence structure consisting of a protasis which recalls the future bliss, followed by an apodosis which indicates the reason why "we" cannot attain such bliss. These six apodoses, plus the sequel to 7:117, indicate man's "fate" for which Adam is supposedly responsible. One could conceivably argue that the connection between Adam and the sinful behavior of his posterity is not absolutely explicit, but as Brandenburger has noted, without the connection with 7:116 and 118, the rest of the passage does not

claiming that the earth is the culprit which taught Adam to sin. He supports this "gnosticizing" idea by accepting the preference of Violet II for the Ethiopic of 7:116: "It would have been better for the earth not to have produced Adam than to bring him and teach him to sin." Harnisch supports this choice on the basis of the rule "lectio difficilior"; but in any event, to accept a unique reading of the Ethiopic against the Latin, Syriac, and Ar-1 is dubious methodology, especially in support of an even more dubious hypothesis.

61. Violet II (pp. 99f) has called attention to some of the problems of balance in the present text. He thinks that 7:124 represents the apodosis of a sentence whose protasis has dropped out. He is at least partially motivated by the desire to recover seven parallel statements after the "O Adam..." of 7:118. The Armenian also gives evidence of some dissatisfaction with the text and has moved 7:118 after 7:126. This does bring the seven questions together, and though Violet suggests that this might be original, the Armenian is hardly sufficient authority for such a move.

62. So Violet II, p. 99.

really make sense.⁶³ Looking then at the elements that compose man's "fate", one arrives at the following list:

7:117 we⁶⁴ live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death

7:119 we have done deeds that bring death

7:120 we have most wickedly become vain⁶⁵

7:121 we have lived wickedly

7:122 we have walked in the most wicked ways

7:124 we have lived in unacceptable ways⁶⁶

7:126 we lived and committed iniquity

Only in 7:120 and 124 could it conceivably be argued that there is not a definite reference to moral evil. As far as 7:120 is concerned, if the Latin "pessime" is ambiguous, then the Syriac, Ethiopic, Ar-1 and Arm. all clearly indicate man's culpability.⁶⁷ With reference to 7:124, only if "places" (τόποις) is retained for "ways" (τρόποις) is there any obscurity. If "places" were to be retained, it is not clear just what would be meant by "living in unacceptable places".

From the above, it would seem rather obvious that this one passage, at least, contains the teaching that Adam is in some sense responsible for the sins

63. Brandenburger, op. cit., p. 35.

64. "We" is attested only by the Ethiopic, but is accepted by Violet II and NEB.

65. Latin: "nos vero pessime vani facti sumus"; Syriac: ܢܚܝܬܝܟܝܢ ܕܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܝܢ.

66. Both Latin and Syriac have "places" instead of "ways", but Violet II suggests that τρόποις was misread as τόποις.

67. Ethiopic: "We have followed the evil one"; Ar-1: "We have done futile things"; Arm: "To us, the shame of sinners".

of his posterity. But whether or not the author thinks that Adam has lifted the burden of responsibility from the shoulders of his descendants, so that they somehow are not able to determine their own destiny, is another matter. Throughout the passage, Ezra has classed himself with the sinners, and in 7:117, there is another apparent reference to the universality of man's fate. The RSV, rendering the Latin, has: "For what good is it to all that they live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death?" Violet II, however, has suggested that the "all" which is in the text of the Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic, is probably erroneous.⁶⁸ The unusual occurrence of the third person plural instead of the first person plural in the Latin and Syriac has already been noted, but it is of course necessary as the subject of the following clause when the "all" stands unqualified in the text. While the "all" may very well represent a corruption in the text, even if it is genuine, it would simply correlate with Ezra's usage of the generalizing "we" in this passage and elsewhere. That 7:117 should not be taken as a reference to total damnation is actually indicated by 7:122 and 125 where Ezra admits that there will be those who have lived a pure life, and who have practised self-discipline and thus will enjoy the eternal reward. It can be concluded then, that while 7:116-126 does indicate a causal relationship between Adam's sin and the sin of his descendants, Ezra is by no means totally despondent over this "fate"

68. Violet II (p. 99) thinks that $\sigma\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ was misread from $\sigma\lambda\omega\varsigma$; but even if the Latin is correct as it stands now, he suggests that the original Hebrew may have been לֹא or לֹא־ , and on the analogy of Jer. 32:27 (citing GK, 27th ed., sec. 152b) could be rendered either as a question: "Is it of any use to anyone?" or as a declarative statement: "It makes no sense at all". This opinion of Violet's is significant because he is here going against his general tendency to opt for the more pessimistic textual readings which imply man's universal condemnation (e.g., in 7:48 and 10:10).

which has befallen man, for there are some who are pure and who do practise self-discipline. This of course links up directly with the question of individual responsibility and the problem of whether or not man is considered to be incapable of determining his own destiny because of Adam's sin. Although Ezra would claim that the vast majority are going to be lost, whether because of Adam's sin, the evil heart or whatever, he leaves the door open for the remnant by merit. In the end, his position varies but little from that of Uriel as to the number of the saved since both admit that many will be lost and only a few saved. The difference lies in the greater sensitivity to the human dilemma which is evident in the Ezra speeches.

c. Summary and Comparison with II Baruch

Insofar as the effects of Adam's sin can be discussed apart from the concept of the evil heart, it may be said that the author of IV Ezra sees Adam as the cause of the world's physical problems and the cause of death for every man. Adam is also in some sense responsible for the sinful behavior of those who have descended from him. But there are numerous indications in the book, both in the immediate context of the Adam passages (e.g., 7:122, 125) and elsewhere (e.g., 3:36; 7:138-140; 8:33), that Ezra does not thereby consider all mankind to be doomed. To be sure, most will perish, and that he laments, but there are those whose faces will shine more than the stars (7:125). With this summary of the situation in IV Ezra, the teaching of II Baruch may now be compared.

There are two primary aspects which distinguish the Adam speculation of II Baruch from that of IV Ezra. First, the evil heart does not appear in

II Baruch. Second, the seer himself emphatically affirms individual responsibility by a metaphor involving the use of Adam himself: Each man is the Adam of his own soul (54:19). Aside from these two aspects, the teachings of the two books are in many respects quite similar. It has frequently been said that II Baruch is polemicizing against the fatalism and pessimism of IV Ezra, but there is no great difference between the two when it comes to Adam speculation,⁶⁹ though there is perhaps a bit more data to work with in II Baruch, and some additional haggadic elements are allowed to creep in.

As far as physical evil is concerned, Adam's sin is said to introduce a number of woes (56:5-16). Not only are the evils of this present age attributed to Adam, but the begetting of children and the passion of parents are also said to be consequences of Adam's sin (56:6). With reference to death, the evidence is divided as to whether Adam's sin brought mortality (17:3; 19:8; 23:4; cf. also 21:22, Endzeit elimination of mortality), or merely a shortened life span (54:15; 56:6; cf., also 73:3, Endzeit elimination of premature death).⁷⁰ Turning to the relationship of Adam's sin to moral evil, one finds a brief passage which seems to parallel the content of IV Ezra 7:116ff. The passage is 48:42-43 and it may be translated as follows:

O Adam, what have you done to all those who are born from you?
And what will be said to the first Eve who obeyed the serpent?

69. See comment in Brandenburger, *op. cit.*, p. 39, on the general similarities in the outlook of the two books.

70. Such discrepancies contributed to the tendency of Charles and others (cf. APOT II, pp. 474ff) to dissect the book into different sources.

For all this multitude is going to corruption,
Nor is there any numbering of those whom the fire devours.

This passage quite clearly links the eternal perdition of Adam's posterity to Adam's (or Eve's) sin, though it is not explicit that the sins committed by Adam's descendants are caused by a moral condition which resulted from Adam's sin. There is a noticeable conflict between this passage and the passage which contains the statements affirming each man's control over his personal destiny (II Baruch 54:15, 19). As the text now stands, both the passages come from the seer and are uncomfortably close to each other to fit neatly into the Brandenburger-Harnisch hypothesis which posits the same skeptical function for the seer in II Baruch as in IV Ezra. Harnisch seems to depend largely on the conclusions of Brandenburger here, who suggests that the double introduction in 48:42 and 44 is sufficient reason to indicate that 48:42-43 is not in its proper place in the text.⁷¹ Although Baruch later affirms that each man is responsible for his own destiny (54:15, 19), the author is not thereby attempting to exonerate Adam. Adam was indeed at one time a privileged being who actually saw the New Jerusalem (4:3), but after his sin, the "darkness of Adam" could symbolize that which was opposed to the "light" kindled by Moses (17:1-18:2). In fact, when Adam sinned, he became a danger not only to his own soul, but to the angels as well (56:10-16).

71. See Brandenburger, *op. cit.*, p. 38, and Harnisch, p. 74. It is of course difficult, if not impossible, to harmonize the two passages, but the appearance of the concepts expressed in 48:42-43, so long after Baruch has supposedly "capitulated" to the side of the divine interlocutor, is particularly embarrassing to the Brandenburger-Harnisch hypothesis. Even the first part of the chapter (48:1-24) contains a rather unrestrained hymn of praise by Baruch, so it is no wonder that the offending verses are thought to belong to another (earlier?) context.

By way of summary, if it can be said that the author's point of view is represented primarily by the seer in both books, then the author of II Baruch does express with greater certainty a belief in man's responsibility for his own destiny. But the traditions in both books are sufficiently diverse so as to make unlikely the proposition that the author of IV Ezra was a fatalist, whereas the author of II Baruch was an optimistic believer in free will. In reality, there is only a difference in degree in the way each author supports the concept of personal responsibility. The author of IV Ezra is simply more pessimistic because he is more keenly aware of the weaknesses of human nature. But, as far as the question of theodicy is concerned, the author of II Baruch is content to extend the blame for evil and sin only as far as Adam; the author of IV Ezra, however, steps even closer to the center of monotheism and by means of the evil heart tradition, implicates God himself. Before this aspect of IV Ezra is taken up in detail, however, brief mention must be made of a potential aspect of theodicy which is rather remarkably omitted from both the Ezra Apocalypse and II Baruch, and that is the placing of the responsibility for evil on a supernatural personality, i.e., Satan.

3. The Neglected Solution: The Responsibility Placed on Satan

Just how close the author of IV Ezra is to the heart of Judaism is suggested by his refusal to posit any rival supernatural figure who could relieve God of direct responsibility for the evil of this world. There were actually several different levels on which the author could have adopted a partial dualistic system, but he seems to have rejected them all.⁷² He does,

72. See note 42 in chapter IV.

of course, recognize the proper function of angels, for Uriel is described as an angel (4:1; 10:28-29; cf. 7:1). Likewise, Jeremiel the archangel serves as God's spokesman (4:36), and God actually has hosts of angels (6:3).

Although the use of Uriel as a dialogue partner may at least partially serve the author's intention of cushioning Ezra's attacks on God, even this is not consistently worked out, and Ezra at times, converses directly with God.⁷³

But nowhere do the angels serve under God's control as accusers or tempters as in I Chron. 21:1, Job 1-2, and Zech. 3:1. Accordingly, there is no Prince of Darkness, Qumran-style, to say nothing of a cosmic dualism with a personal Ahriman as found in Zoroastrianism. It has been claimed by Harnisch, however, that there are some statements from Ezra which indicate a gnostic distancing between God and his creation.⁷⁴ But to the contrary, God is consistently seen to hold a close relationship to his world, both in its pristine state and after the entrance of sin. Thus, Uriel can even depict God as referring to the world as "my world" and "my earth" (9:20). The lengthy discourses by Ezra on creation in 6:38-59 and 8:4-14 appeal to God's very act of creation as the reason why he should intervene now. Direct links between God and his creatures are established by Ezra in 6:55; 8:7, 13, 24, 44-45, with the most explicit statements being those which say that man is a creature of God's own hands (8:7, 44). Thus the evidence is considerable and convincing that both

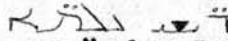
73. See chapter III, B, 2, b.

74. In particular, 7:116, which in the Ethiopic states that the earth taught Adam to sin. See Harnisch, p. 52ff for discussion. Note also 7:62 where Ezra addresses his lament to the earth (see Harnisch, p. 155ff). Note also 3:4 and 6:53 where God commands the dust or the earth to bring forth Adam.

Ezra and Uriel are in agreement as to who is really responsible for this world. Whether at the beginning of time, or at the end (cf. 6:6), God remains in control. For this very reason, the author resorts, in the end, to the ultimate cause of man's problems: God himself. How he formulates this complaint by means of the evil heart must be taken up shortly, but first this absence of Satan in IV Ezra will be compared briefly with the situation in II Baruch.

The role of the angels in II Baruch is only marginally more prominent than in IV Ezra.⁷⁵ An angel is the interlocutor unambiguously only once, and that is when Ramiel, who presides over true visions, is introduced (55:3). Otherwise, Baruch seems to be speaking directly with God. When the angels do appear, they are always under God's control (e.g., 21:6; 51:11; 55:3; cf. 48:10). That there is a certain hierarchy among the angels is evident from 59:11 and probably from 54:3.⁷⁶ Never, in II Baruch, are the angels seen to be tempting man or leading them astray, though destructive functions are attributed to an angel of death (21:23). In perhaps the most notable passage dealing with the angels in II Baruch, the Watcher tale is turned on its head and man is said to be responsible for leading astray the angels (56:10-16) rather than vice versa (cf. T. Reub. 5:5-7). In short, the author of II Baruch is convinced both of man's responsibility for his own evil doings and of God's effective and full control over the world, so there is no need to

75. See Bogaert I, pp. 425-438, for discussion of the angelology of II Baruch.

76. The Syriac of 54:3 has  which Charles (APOT II, p. 510) renders as "beginnings of the ages", but Bogaert II, p. 102, prefers "les Princes des siecles" on the analogy of the Greek ἀρχαί or ἀρχόντες.

introduce a Satanic figure. In fact, II Baruch seems to find the solution to the theodicy-problem in the will of man, with only a slight sharing of responsibility with Adam. Thus II Baruch moves very little from the OT "solutions" to the problem of evil. Other literary figures in late Judaism were actively picking up the Satan and/or the evil yetzer traditions and were making considerable use of them, but the author of II Baruch was able to accept a theodicy based on the premise that each man is responsible for his own sin. But this solution which was adequate enough for some, was clearly inadequate for others, and among the latter would undoubtedly be the author of IV Ezra. The Ezra Apocalypse reflects a more serious probing for the roots of evil, and in the end, the author had to conclude that it was God himself who was responsible for the evil seed (i.e., the evil yetzer). The extent to which the author has developed the evil yetzer tradition as part of a rational solution to the theodicy-problem is a matter which must now be taken up.

4. The Evil Yetzer Tradition: Responsibility Placed on God

a. The Evil Yetzer Terminology in IV Ezra

i. The General Scope of the Tradition. While it is commonly accepted that the author of IV Ezra has made use of the evil yetzer tradition and has in fact worked this tradition into some sort of a synthesis with the Adamic fall tradition, the varied terminology in the extant versions of IV Ezra makes precise analysis difficult. Before the constituent elements of the evil yetzer can be effectively laid out, therefore, some attempt must be made to correlate the various terms which could possibly belong within the evil yetzer tradition.

The expressions which seem most clearly to imply a connection with the evil yetzer are "heart", "seed", and "root". "Heart" occurs in the phrase "evil heart" (cor malignum or cor malum / קד קד): 3:20, 21, 26; 4:4; 7:48. In addition, the heart is the ground where the evil seed is sown (4:27-31), as well as the place where the law is sown (9:31-36), and the place where Ezra asks God to sow (good) seed that man might have life (8:6). On one occasion, the "evil root" is also said to reside in the heart (3:21). In the last days, the heart will be changed to another spirit (cor/sensum; קד/קד) (6:26). In addition to the above passages where heart-seed-root are closely linked with each other and often seem to be interchangeable expressions, there is other terminology which may also belong to the evil yetzer tradition. In 8:53, the "evil root" is mentioned without being connected with the heart as Ezra is promised that in the age to come, the "evil root" would be sealed up from him, apparently to be banished along with illness, death, hell, corruption, and sorrows (8:53-54). In 7:92, the phrase "evil thought (cogitamentum) which was formed with them", may very well go back to a play on words in the Hebrew using the noun and verb from the root קד.

There is another group of passages involving the use of the Latin "sensum" (7:62-64, 71-72; 8:6; 14:34) which may also belong to the yetzer tradition, though it seems less likely. Harnisch notes the Violet II conjecture that the occurrences of "sensum" in 7:62ff may represent an original yetzer.⁷⁷ Harnisch is interested in finding support in the passage for his

77. Violet II (and Harnisch, pp. 156f) cite for support the unusual occurrence of "sensum" with "cogitatio" in the Vulgate of Gen. 8:21, one of

hypothesis so he arrives at a paraphrase which suggests that Ezra is lamenting the fate which results from the rule of the yetzer (sensum) in man.⁷⁸ Harnisch then goes on to argue that Uriel's use of "sensum" in 7:71-72 represents a rebuttal involving the concept of the יֵצֶר טוֹב, since in 7:72, "sensum" is parallel with "mandata" and "lex".⁷⁹ While Harnisch has produced a fascinating piece of exegesis, he seems to have avoided the real point of 7:62-74, namely, that the beasts are to be envied, first, because they do not have to contemplate the prospect of judgment, and second, because they are not responsible for returning reasoned obedience as a means of avoiding the terrors of judgment. Both parts are essential to Ezra's complaint and to Uriel's rebuttal, and in fact, form the link that holds the dialogue together at this point.⁸⁰ The references in 8:6 and 14:34 are cited by Harnisch as

the key passages for the development of the rabbinic concept of the evil yetzer. In the related passage, Gen. 6:5, however, only "cogitatio" occurs. In the Hebrew, Gen. 6:5 has וְכָל יֵצֶר מַחְשָׁבָם לָרָע while 8:21 has simply וְכָל יֵצֶר לָרָע, so the Vulgate has deleted a word from 6:5 and added it in 8:21. In this connection, the occurrence of "cogitamentum" (a synonym of "cogitatio") in IV Ezra 7:92 is also of interest since "cogitatio" and "sensum" are parallel in the Vulgate of 8:21.

78. Harnisch's suggested paraphrase, which he admits can be held "mit Vorbehalt", is as follows: "Nun aber ist der (böse) Sinn (von Anfang an) mit uns aufgewachsen; und deswegen sind wir (jetzt) voller Unruhe (Angst), weil wir--da wir den (bösen) Sinn in uns tragen--(mit Sicherheit) dem (endgültigen) Verderben anheimfallen (werden)" (p. 159).

79. See Harnisch, pp. 160-163.

80. Harnisch would see the link between the lament and rebuttal in another play on words, namely, the reference by Ezra to the (evil) yetzer which is then subtly picked up by Uriel in the form of the (good) yetzer. There are some references in antecedent sources which would allow a more active cognitive sense to be attached to the yetzer, rather than viewing it merely as a non-cognitive drive as would seem to be its more general usage. Examples for the possible cognitive sense may be cited from Ecclus. 27:5-6 (Hebrew = 6:22^{(1) (2)}); 21:11 (Syriac); 23:2 (LXX). See discussion of the data from Ecclus. in

passages which use "sensum" in a way that might also suggest an underlying yetzer, but without a firmer basis for accepting "sensum" as yetzer in 7:62ff, it is even more dubious to suggest such for the other passages. On balance, while it cannot be ruled out that an original yetzer may lie behind "sensum" in IV Ezra, the context of the crucial passage (7:62ff) makes it seem unlikely. The weak point in Harnisch's exegesis is that he is again permitting his hypothesis to control his interpretation of the text, rather than allowing the text to control his hypothesis.

It would appear, then, that the discussion of the yetzer tradition in IV Ezra can for the most part be limited to the occurrences of the terms "heart", "seed" and "root". But even such a delimitation of terms does not resolve the problem of interpretation, for the question is very much undecided as to whether the evil heart is the equivalent of the evil yetzer or the result of the evil yetzer. This point must now be taken up.

ii. Evil Heart: Equivalent for Evil Yetzer or the Result of the Evil Yetzer? In general, the claim that the evil yetzer is the cause of the evil heart is based on the following arguments: first, if the evil seed and the evil root are in the heart (4:30; 3:22), there is a certain illogicality

chapter I, C, 4, b. Harnisch also calls attention to the "good mind" in Test. Benj. 5:1; 6:5 (ἡ ἀγαθὴ διάνοια (διάνοια = sensum), the latter reference being in the context (T.B. 6:1-7) which discusses the good inclination (διαβούλιον) which is the more normal equivalent for yetzer. It may be that "inclination" (διαβούλιον) and "mind" (διάνοια) are synonyms in T.B., and if "sensum" = διάνοια, this may constitute a basis for "sensum" being drawn into the yetzer discussion. But it would seem highly unlikely that "sensum" could be used in the totally negative sense as Harnisch would seek to understand it in connection with the Ezra lament. Ezra is not saying that the "sensum" has doomed man, but that the blessing of "sensum" has turned into a curse.

about using the terms as equivalents for the heart itself.⁸¹ Second, the Latin of 7:48 refers to the evil heart which has "grown up" in us, thus implying a process which takes place in the course of time, rather than a condition inherent from the start.⁸² In support of the view that heart-seed-root are virtually synonymous, it may be argued, first, that it is misleading to expect consistency in the use of metaphors in connection with the yetzer tradition. While there is admittedly a certain incongruity in the evil yetzer being described as in the heart and yet being the heart itself, other sources show no hesitancy in equating the yetzer with the heart while speaking

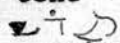
81. Harnisch (p. 48) agrees with Brandenburger (*op. cit.*, p. 34) that the "cor malignum" is to be distinguished from the "malignitas radicis" (3:22), "granum seminis mali" (4:30-31), and the "plasmatum cogitamentum malum" (7:92). Brandenburger gives the more detailed argument (*ibid.*, pp. 34-35), but Harnisch (pp. 48-49) notes that Box and Charles hold the same view, while Freundorfer, Michel, Kuss, Moore, Violet II, and Keulers take the opposing point of view, namely, that all the expressions are interchangeable. Box (p. 16) seeks to explain the causal relationship between the yetzer and the evil heart by appealing to the Syriac (ܡܕܢܐ) and Ethiopic in support of the translation "The first Adam, clothing himself with the evil heart..." (3:21). Box concludes that "Adam 'clothed himself' with the cor malignum by yielding to the suggestions of the 'evil impulse'. The 'evil heart' thus developed inevitably led to sin and death." The Latin has "baiolans (φ) or "baiulans (ψ): "bearing". It would appear that Box is perhaps reading too much into the Syriac when he emphasizes the reflexive meaning of as over against the connotation of the simple active voice. Violet I renders both the Syriac and the Ethiopic by "tragen" (trug), thereby indicating that "wearing" or "bearing" would be just as appropriate as "clothing oneself".

82. The Ethiopic also supports the Latin. Harnisch emphasizes this point (see pp. 48-49, 157). Violet II (p. 80) suggests, however, that 7:48 originally may have been ܡܕܢܐ ܕܠܒܐ, in which case, Harnisch would see a parallel with 7:64a where he has claimed that "sensum" = yetzer, and is inherent in man from the beginning. See Harnisch, pp. 49, 155-157. In any case, the Syriac simply reads, "an evil heart is in us".

at the same time of its being in the heart.⁸³ Second, if the evil heart is only the result of Adam's yielding to the evil yetzer, then the evil heart can in no way be used as an explanation of Adam's sins, yet this appears to be the author's usage in 3:21 and 26. Not only is it said that Adam was burdened with the evil heart, and therefore sinned (3:21), but Adam and all his descendants sinned because they all had the same evil heart (3:26). It cannot be said, then, that Adam's yielding to the evil yetzer was first the cause of Adam's sin, and a resultant evil heart was the cause of the downfall of all his descendants, for the evil heart itself was already the cause of the downfall of Adam. Once this is recognized, then the statement in 4:30: "a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning" would mean no more and no less than: Adam was burdened by an evil heart from the beginning. But because of the requirements of the context in 4:26-32, the author simply used a stylistic variation for the evil heart, namely, the evil seed, in spite of the fact that there is a built-in illogicality of making the evil heart equivalent to the grain of evil seed which is in the heart. It may further be said, that it is not possible to harmonize the various expressions referring to the evil yetzer by arguing that the evil seed was sown as a result of Adam's sin. One could perhaps argue such a case from 7:11 and 7:116ff which speak of the dire results of Adam's sin for posterity,

83. See discussion in chapter I, C, 4. Of particular interest are: I QS 5:5 which equates the evil yetzer with the heart, and Apoc.Mos. 13:5 which speaks of the "evil heart". Perhaps most significant of all, is the tendency of Targum Ps-Jon. to translate "heart" by yetzer. See Schechter, op. cit., p. 258, for list of citations. Also, see ibid., pp. 255ff for the later rabbinic citations which indicate that the yetzer can be equated with the heart and yet be described as in the heart.

but neither of these contexts mention the evil heart or any of its equivalents. The possibility is excluded not only by the argument of chapter 3 as noted above, but by the strong presumption that the phrase "from the beginning" in 4:30 refers to "the beginning of all things", not to the beginning of Adam's sin.⁸⁴ If "from the beginning" refers to the time of Adam's creation, then the evil seed is sufficient cause for Adam's sin. The primal sin would then be the result of the evil seed, rather than the cause of the evil seed being sown. It must be admitted in this connection, then, that the author has not only been quite free in the terminology which he uses to discuss the evil heart, but also that he has failed to successfully link together the Adamic fall tradition and the evil yetzer tradition. In 7:116ff, the author has used the Adamic fall by itself (i.e., not in connection with the evil heart) to explain the sin of Adam's descendants, and the evil yetzer tradition is also used separately (i.e., not in connection with Adam's sin) as a factor in moral evil (e.g., 7:92; cf. 4:4; 8:53); but when the two traditions are brought together, the author was prevented by logical necessity from consistently using both traditions as

84. Oesterley has noted in another connection (comment on 4:42, p. 38) that the phrase "from the beginning" in Hebrew phraseology means "from the beginning of all things". There are several different expressions in the Syriac text which could be translated "from the beginning", but the one in 4:30 is  which is the same phrase used in 4:42 on which Oesterley is commenting. This phrase is used at least four other times in the Syriac of IV Ezra to refer to the primeval beginnings (3:4; 6:38; 10:10; 14:22), which strongly suggests that such is also the case in 4:30. The one exceptional usage is 4:42 which Oesterley notes as a problem passage. The context indicates that the hastening "to give back the things that were committed to them from the beginning" probably is intended to refer to the souls of the righteous mentioned in 4:35ff. In such a case, "from the beginning" could hardly refer to the primeval beginnings, but could only mean from the time when the first righteous person died. Oesterley thinks that the author has been imprecise and has poorly adapted language which was originally intended to refer to the chambers where pre-existent souls are kept.

an explanation for moral evil. The Adamic fall tradition was one that was readily available to him, though not in a fixed form, so he used it as a means of explaining the sin of Adam's posterity, but it was of no use for explaining why Adam sinned; only the evil yetzer tradition would suffice for this purpose. Yet when Adam's sin is explained by means of the "cor malignum" which every man possesses (cf. 3:21, 26), the effect is to reduce the importance of Adam's first sin, since Adam is then simply the first man to sin as a result of the "cor malignum". Even the phrase "et facta est permanens infirmitas" (3:22) can refer to nothing more than that the evil heart brought the same results to all men as it had to Adam (cf. 3:21, 26). For purposes of theodicy, however, the evil yetzer is of greater significance than the Adamic fall, for it pushes the responsibility for evil all the way back to God. Though the author nowhere states that God actually created the evil heart, he nevertheless blames God for its continuance when he complains that God did not remove it to enable the law to bear fruit (3:20). But before the significance of the evil yetzer teaching as theodicy can be further discussed, an attempt must be made to determine just how much of the fully developed tradition is present in IV Ezra.

b. The Elements of the Rabbinic Teaching in IV Ezra

The evil yetzer teaching is one aspect of IV Ezra where the positions of Ezra and Uriel are in relative agreement, though as might be expected, a difference in emphasis may be detected as far as the confidence of overcoming it is concerned, but this will be noted in the appropriate place in the summary below. As a means of indicating the various elements of the yetzer teaching

in IV Ezra, the same categories will be employed here as are used in chapter I for the outline of the rabbinic doctrine.⁸⁵ Thus, the basic elements are noted first, followed by a listing of those aspects which relate to gaining victory over the yetzer.

i. Basic Characteristics

(1) God is responsible for creating the evil yetzer in every man.

This aspect is not absolutely explicit in IV Ezra, though it is strongly implied. That every man is afflicted with the evil yetzer is clear enough from 3:26 (cf 3:21; 7:48, 92; 8:53), but God's responsibility is only inferred from the complaint that he did not remove the evil heart (3:20). Otherwise, the presence of the evil yetzer is simply affirmed with no statement as to how it got there. This is true both of the Ezra speeches (3:21, 22, 26; 7:48) and of the Uriel speeches (4:30; 7:92; 8:53).

(2) The evil yetzer is located in the heart, but may also be described as being the heart itself. This is clearly the case in IV Ezra as discussed above and need not be repeated here. The evil yetzer as external to man, and/or personified as Satan is not, however, an aspect of the teaching in IV Ezra.

(3) The evil yetzer is said to arise early in life. Such statements as there are in IV Ezra that would apply to time of origin would indicate that the evil yetzer has been a part of human existence from the beginning (4:30)--an inborn feature of man's existence (7:92; cf. 8:53).

85. See chapter I, C, 4, a.

(4) The function of the evil yetzer is to tempt and lead astray, but may serve a useful function in life, and may even be described as essential. Only the negative function of the yetzer appears in IV Ezra, and this is evident in most of the passages which use the heart-seed-root terminology (3:20-26; 4:4, 27-31; 7:48; 7:92; 8:53). It would only be possible to find a hint of a positive function for the evil yetzer or the presence of a good yetzer if "sensum" in 7:71-72 could be accepted as an argument which involves the use of the good yetzer, a possibility discussed above, but considered rather unlikely.⁸⁶

ii. Obtaining Victory Over the Yetzer

(1) Man is responsible for controlling his evil yetzer, but at times, victory over the yetzer can only be obtained through God's gracious assistance. The clearest statement of personal responsibility over the yetzer is from Uriel in 7:92 where the righteous are said to have struggled to overcome the evil thought formed with them. In the unlikely event that "sensum" in 14:34 also belongs to the yetzer tradition, then Ezra would also directly indicate man's responsibility, but only at the end of the consolation episodes. Otherwise,

86. Mention should also be made here of the good seed of 4:32 which is the antithesis of the evil seed in 4:30-31. In spite of the fact that the good seed is the counterpart of the evil seed (see chapter IV, A, 2, c, and chapter V, A, 5, b, ii), it does not seem to be a reference to the good yetzer as the antithesis of the evil yetzer. The author has mixed his metaphors so that the good seed apparently refers to the joys of the coming age. In 8:6, the appeal for (good) seed would appear to be an appeal for God to make the law effective, rather than for an implanting of a good yetzer. The law as (good) seed is attested elsewhere in the Ezra speeches (9:31-36; cf. 3:20).

Ezra implies that only God can make it possible for man to overcome the yetzer (3:20; cf. 8:6).

(2) The weapons against the evil yetzer are the study of the law and the performance of deeds of loving-kindness. Ezra is well aware that the law is supposed to be the proper antidote for the evil yetzer, but he virtually admits that the law is impotent in the face of the "cor malignum" (3:20, 22), or that even when the law remains in its glory, the people still perish (9:31-37). He appeals to God to give seed for the heart (i.e., somehow make the law effective?) so that man might live (8:6), and he wants God to be gracious to those with no store of good works (8:32-36), but the whole of chapter 14, dealing as it does with the restoration of the law, surely implies that the author was willing to accept that the law was the answer to the moral dilemma, even if he was not wholly convinced of its effectiveness. The other antidote, the performance of deeds of loving-kindness is not mentioned in connection with the yetzer in IV Ezra, though one could easily surmise from 8:32-36 that "works" would not rate highly in Ezra's (i.e., the author's) estimation.

(3) The evil yetzer will be removed permanently in the messianic era. The only statements which refer to the ultimate removal of the evil yetzer come from Uriel. Ezra is explicitly promised that in the age to come the evil root will be sealed from him (8:53), and in 6:26, it is said that the heart of the people will be changed to a different spirit ("sensum"). One other passage implies the elimination of the evil yetzer in the age to come and that is 7:92 which speaks of the righteous (after they have gone to their reward) who have overcome the evil thought, suggesting that such battles are quite in the past.

c. Evaluation of the Evil Yetzer Tradition in IV Ezra As an Element in Theodicy

From the standpoint of theodicy, the most notable feature of the evil yetzer tradition in IV Ezra is the absence of those features which make the tradition most serviceable as theodicy, namely, the good yetzer as the anti-thesis of the evil yetzer, and the evil yetzer as performing useful and/or essential functions in life. In the fully developed doctrine of the evil yetzer, the rabbis made God responsible for the potential for evil, but they made man responsible for actual sin. While they said that God created the evil yetzer, their theodicy consisted both in positing the law and the good yetzer as forces opposed to the evil yetzer, and in defining the evil yetzer as a force which was not evil in itself, but which could potentially be used for good or evil. Of these elements, only the law figures at all in IV Ezra, and that really only indirectly and not until the final episode. In the very first chapter of his book, the author through Ezra, laments that man has been quite overwhelmed by the evil yetzer (evil heart) and that the known antidote (i.e., the law) has not only been ineffective, but has actually been banished by the evil root (3:22; cf. also 4:23). Later, however, he recovers somewhat and admits that the law remains in its glory (9:31-37). Ezra retreats even further from his complaint in chapter 14, but en route to this regaining of confidence, he reinforces his appeals to God for mercy towards those who are incapable of amassing a store of good works (8:32, 36). Because of the forcefulness of the author's appeals in episodes I-III, the question that remains will always tantalize students of the Ezra Apocalypse: was the author really convinced in the end that God's law was an effective solution to the human dilemma?

5. Summary: Theodicy in IV Ezra As a Rational Solution

In bringing together the various elements which can be used in a rational attempt to justify the character and government of God in the face of the problem of evil, one discovers that three out of four possible traditions are used in IV Ezra. With hesitation, the author admits that man is still responsible for determining his own destiny, and the dialogue tension clearly indicates that the author is not at all happy that so few are really able thus to attain future happiness. While not eliminating the concept of personal responsibility, both Adam's sin and the evil heart have greatly reduced man's potential for righteous behavior. The author makes no use of dualistic conceptions to assuage his troubles, employing neither a personal Satan nor an impersonal, metaphysical dualism. His controversy is with God, and in keeping with basic OT and Jewish tradition, he essentially blames God for evil. But if IV Ezra is theodicy, in what sense does he justify God? By pushing his "theodicy" all the way back to the evil yetzer tradition, he virtually admits the inadequacy of any of the other solutions to the theodicy-problem. Yet once he has concluded that God is to blame, he strangely neglects to make use of those elements which would have produced a more satisfactory attempt to justify God from within the evil yetzer tradition. So it must be concluded that there is no effective rational theodicy in IV Ezra. Nevertheless, God is somehow justified in the end: the Most High is a righteous judge (14:32). Though rational theodicy eluded him, the author's experience still enabled him to justify God. It is this experiential aspect of theodicy in IV Ezra which must now be evaluated.

B. Theodicy in IV Ezra: the Experimental Solution

The very existence of IV Ezra as a book much concerned with God's justice is premised on the age-old Hebrew conviction that the Most High God is a just and righteous God who will not only honor his covenant promises, but will deal equitably with all mankind. In the words of Abraham: "Will not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Likewise, Job could challenge God to a debate in open court (Job 13:3) because he knew that God was a righteous judge who would face the facts squarely, and Jeremiah's complaints grew out of his convictions about God's character: "You are righteous, therefore I will question you" (Jer. 12:1). So the author of IV Ezra is standing in a noble tradition when he questions God's dealings with man.⁸⁷

That there is a transition from agony to tranquility has been amply documented in the course of the present study, particularly in chapters III and IV. But it cannot be claimed that the author of IV Ezra gives specific answers to the problems he raises. What can be said, however, is that IV Ezra demonstrates that even when rational solutions fall short of the mark, confidence in God need not die. While it has not been possible to pinpoint precisely in the course of this study how the content of the book enabled Ezra to move from doubt to confidence, at least it has been possible to document the literary methods which the author has used to establish the fact of that transition. As a result, IV Ezra can be seen to belong to that theodicy tradition in Israel and the Ancient Near East which finds consolation

87. See further, Davidson, op. cit. for a most interesting discussion of the role of doubt in the OT.

in experience even when neat, rational solutions to the problem of evil are not forthcoming.⁸⁸ But the type of experiential solution which the author of IV Ezra appears to accept is perhaps something quite different from the Kierkegaardian leap-of-faith variety, for Ezra's consolation is based on a certain amount of evidence. This is hinted at in the book when Ezra is especially honored in receiving the visions of the end-time,⁸⁹ and when he is selected as a second Moses. But there is a more subtle aspect that might have a bearing on the author's consolation. It has been noted on several occasions that Ezra remains unrepentant in his complaints, a situation vividly illustrated by his parting statement in episode III (9:14-16). If his complaints are never really answered, as appears to be the case, then it may very well be that Ezra's arguments in episodes I-III might also have retained some claim upon the author's convictions. Thus the review of God's saving acts in chapter 3, complaints notwithstanding, still could give Ezra (i.e., the author) hope for the future. To this could be added the election and creation appeals in episodes II and III, and from episode III, Ezra's hopes for intercession on behalf of the lost as well as his hopes for mercy from God, could very well have remained part of the author's "theodicy" even though not all these aspects are specifically affirmed in the final episodes. Furthermore, it would appear

88. For further discussion of the way that Israel and her neighbors solved the theodicy problem, see Crenshaw, *op. cit.*; Eichrodt, "Vorsehungsglaube und Theodizee"; J. J. Stamm, *Das Leiden des Unschuldigen in Babylon und Israel*, Zürich, 1946, and "Die Theodizee in Babylon und Israel," *Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux* 9 (1944), pp. 99-107; John Gray, "The Book of Job in the Context of Near Eastern Literature," *ZAW* 82 (1970), pp. 251-269; R. J. Williams, "Theodicy in the Ancient Near East," *Can. J. Th.* 2 (1956), pp. 14-26.

89. Note the opinion of Gunkel (p. 341) to the effect that the author really did have visionary experiences.

somewhat unjustified to say that the author of IV Ezra was simply an apocalypticist who was only interested in the future hope.⁹⁰ His final word in chapter 14 indicates that he was perhaps prepared for a rather long siege in this evil age, and that the issues he had raised in episodes I-III were designed to find solutions which would put his "sensum" at ease en route to the consummation: if he could really admit that God is just (cf. 10:16; 8:36; 14:34), then life in this present evil age would not be so intolerable after all.

Given the nature of the consolation offered in IV Ezra, it is a legitimate, if moot, question to ask just how firm the author's faith was in the end. The answer to that question probably depends mostly on the interpreter of the book as the history of research in chapter II has tended to indicate. The author of IV Ezra has been depicted both as a pessimistic hater of Gentiles (Rosenthal) as well as a sensitive lover of all mankind (Gunkel, Montefiore); both as a faithful Pharisee (Mundle) and as a detached apocalypticist (Oesterley, Neusner). One thing is clear, however, and that is, that IV Ezra witnesses to the fact that when God's people fall on hard times, the spirit of his people is not thereby to be crushed, and here IV Ezra continues to have its modern counterparts, for in spite of overwhelming evidence that can be cited by some against any possibility of theodicy, modern Jews are still quite capable of recovering and/or maintaining their faith in God, just as the

90. Contra Neusner, op. cit. pp. 315-317.

author of IV Ezra was able to do.⁹¹ Theodicy is, after all, a rather personal and subjective thing. For those who have no convictions about a righteous God, theodicy is of no concern. But even those who are convinced that there is a God and that he should be righteous, can find solutions to theodicy-related problems on many different levels. The author of II Baruch was evidently satisfied on a rather superficial level, but what was theodicy for him was really only a statement of the problem to such sensitive souls as the author of IV Ezra. The fact that the author of IV Ezra plunged to such great depths in his search for answers makes his return all the more remarkable, and even if he did not find a satisfactory rational solution, his experience will remain as a noble witness to the resilience of the Jewish spirit in a time of crisis.

91. For two good examples of "modern" theodicies, see Norman Lamm, "Faith and Doubt," in Faith and Doubt; Studies in Traditional Jewish Thought, New York, 1971, pp. 1-40; and Robert Cordis, "A Cruel God Or None--Is There No Other Choice?", Judaism, 21 (1972), pp. 277-84.

CONCLUSION

In the attempt to determine where the author of the Ezra Apocalypse would place the ultimate responsibility for evil, the present study has sought to demonstrate the importance of form and structure for the understanding of the book. This involves an analysis of the seven-episode scheme and the dialogue format. First, with regard to the seven-episode scheme, the author has carefully developed a 3 + 1 + 3 outline, using the first three episodes to develop the various aspects of his theodicy-problem, the fourth one as a means of transition from complaint to consolation, and the last three to re-establish confidence in the God that he had so severely questioned initially. Second, the author has relied on the dialogue format to develop the points of tension with which he is struggling. On the one hand, there is the complaining and pessimistic seer who openly questions God's justice while demonstrating a genuine sympathy with perishing sinners. On the other hand, there is the dogmatic and deterministic angel Uriel, who vigorously defends God's actions, but who cheerfully dismisses the many perishing sinners as not worthy of concern. It would appear that the author has used the angelic figure both

as a spokesman for a point of view which he considers to be unrealistic and as a mediating figure to absorb some of the sharpness of Ezra's complaints against God.

There are two major facets to the author's argument. His first concern would appear to be the present distress of Israel the nation (the one in the hands of the many), but on closer analysis, this should probably be considered primarily as the catalyst which activates the author's real concern, namely, the problem of moral evil and the impending doom facing all mankind (the many who will be lost compared with the few who will be saved). Although the author has appropriately indicated his concern for Israel at the beginning and at the end of each episode, the way in which his interest in moral evil permeates even those contexts dealing with the nation Israel suggests that this is his primary theodicy-problem. In addition, Ezra's complaint about the many who perish in 9:14-16 stands as an unanswered challenge and gives the impression that this is a question for which the author has no answer. Even though the final episodes are more optimistic in tone and speak of a just judge (14:32) and mercy after death (14:34), the vivid impression left by the author's complaints in episodes I-III casts a long shadow over the whole book.

The final chapter of the present study has delineated the author's attempts to find a solution to his theodicy-problem. He was evidently not satisfied with any of the solutions then current in Judaism which sought to give a rational explanation for evil so that God could be seen to be justified. Although the author affirms, both through Ezra and Uriel, that man is responsible for determining his own destiny, Ezra is seen to hold that position with a distinct lack of enthusiasm, thereby suggesting that as far as the

author was concerned, simply to assert individual responsibility was an inadequate explanation of the human dilemma. Thus he adopted the theory of the Adamic fall and made use of the evil yetzer tradition, though he evidently rejected all dualistic systems, refusing even to include the figure of Satan as a part of his theodicy. In the end, he was forced to conclude that it was God himself who was responsible for the existence of the evil heart in man. Yet the author does not take full advantage of those aspects of the evil yetzer tradition which are most suitable for the purpose of constructing a theodicy, for he does not introduce the concept of a good yetzer as a means of counteracting the evil yetzer, nor does he envisage the law as an effective antidote; and perhaps most significantly, he makes use only of the negative aspects of the evil yetzer tradition, apparently refusing to define the yetzer as a more-or-less neutral force which could be seen as having a potential either for good or for evil. Yet in spite of the fact that the author does not arrive at a coherent rational solution to his theodicy-problem, he nevertheless is finally able to claim that God is a righteous judge (14:32). Thus it would appear that the author of IV Ezra found an experiential solution in lieu of rational answers, and in so doing, demonstrates that he belongs within a well-attested OT and Near Eastern tradition.

In addition to illustrating the importance of form and structure for the analysis of the elements of theodicy in IV Ezra, the present study has adduced a certain amount of evidence in favor of recognizing the Ezra speeches as an integral part of the author's own viewpoint, rather than as an heretical position against which he is polemicizing as argued by Brandenburger and Harnisch. Not only is this suggested by the author's choice of pseudonym and the heart-rending pathos of the Ezra speeches, but it is confirmed by the way

in which the author has manipulated the various formal elements to preserve the "reputation" of his seer while at the same time giving credibility to his complaints. Accordingly, it is possible to typify the author as a truly sensitive person who was attempting a corrective to Jewish theology from within, rather than as a vigorous polemicist who was repulsing an attack on the fundamental principles of his faith. Thus the study of the form and structure of IV Ezra can be seen not only as essential for the proper understanding of the content of the book, but also for the proper appreciation of the author himself and his relationship to his Jewish faith.

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